



# Defeat the Heat

## What is dehydration?

Dehydration is the excessive loss of fluids from the body. It occurs when the total amount of water lost through sweating, urination, diarrhea, and/or vomiting is greater than the fluids taken in. A child with severe dehydration must be hospitalized to receive intravenous fluids.

## What are the signs of dehydration and heat exhaustion?

Dehydration places children at risk for serious conditions like heat illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Early signs of *dehydration* may include:

- Thirst
- Dry or sticky mouth
- Headache
- Muscle cramping
- Irritability
- Extreme fatigue
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Decreased performance

Early signs of *heat exhaustion* may include:

- Nausea
- Feeling faint or dizzy
- Heavy sweating
- Rapid, weak heartbeat
- Dark-colored urine
- Cool, moist, pale skin
- Cramps
- Headache
- Fatigue



## How to prevent dehydration

### Drink before activity:

12 ounces of fluid 30 minutes before activity begins

### Drink during activity:

Children under 90 pounds: 5 ounces every 20 minutes

Children over 90 pounds: 9 ounces every 20 minutes

### Drink after activity:

Drink every 20 minutes during the first hour after the activity to make up for fluid loss.

**EASY TIP** A child's gulp equals a ½ ounce of fluid. Your child should drink at least **10 gulps every 20 minutes** of play.

## What to do when dehydration and heat illness occurs

Treatment of dehydration and heat illness should take place immediately. Depending on the severity of the situation, seek medical attention from a certified athletic trainer or dial 911 for Emergency Medical Services.

- Move the child to a cool place.
- Have the child drink a glass of cool, lightly salted water or a sports drink, such as Gatorade.
- Raise the child's legs 8-12 inches.
- Sponge the child's head, face and trunk with cool, wet cloths.
- Fan the child.
- Keep the child from physical activity for the remainder of the day.



## Comparison of Heat Illnesses

### Heat Stroke

(The most severe and life-threatening)

- Dry, flushed hot skin
- Very high body temperature
- No sweating
- Life-threatening

### Heat Exhaustion

(Less critical, but requires prompt attention)

- Moist, pale, cool skin
- Normal or sub-normal temperature
- Heavy sweating
- Serious, but not life-threatening

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