

## Hot Weather Safety

It sure is getting hot out there. Heat related deaths in the United States exceed 600 per year and is expected to rise.

Here are some things to remember this summer as we go about our assigned duties:

- Drink more fluids regardless of your activity level.
- Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink.
  - **Warning:** If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask him how much you should drink while the weather is hot.
- Don't drink liquids that contain alcohol, caffeine or large amounts of sugar—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels).

Here are some signs and symptoms you may experience if you have not followed these guidelines:

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Sluggishness or fatigue
- Disorientation, agitation or confusion
- Seizure
- High body temperature
- Hot, dry skin that is flushed but not sweaty
- Rapid heart beat
- Loss of consciousness
- Hallucinations

It is important for the person to be treated immediately as heat stroke can cause permanent damage or death. There are some immediate first aid measures you can take while waiting for help to arrive:

- Get the person indoors.
- Remove clothing and gently apply cool water to the skin followed by fanning to stimulate sweating.
- Apply ice packs to the groin and armpits.
- Have the person lie down in a cool area with their feet slightly elevated