



# Heat Awareness Terms

## HEAT WAVE

- Long period of excessive heat, often combined with high humidity
- National Weather Service and the Kansas City Missouri Health Department step up their procedures to alert the public during these periods

## HEAT INDEX

- The number of degrees Fahrenheit (F) that tell how hot it really feels when relative humidity is added to the actual air temperature
- Exposure to full sunshine can increase the heat index by 15 degrees

## HEAT CRAMPS

- Painful muscular spasms, usually in the abdomen, arms and legs
- Usually seen in healthy people who overwork during a high heat index period
- May be the first sign that the body is having trouble coping with the heat

## HEAT EXHAUSTION

- This is a more severe response to salt and water loss that occurs in people who exercise or work in hot environments or are otherwise dehydrated
- **WATCH FOR THESE SIGNALS:** Headache, nausea, fatigue, profuse perspiration, and possible loss of consciousness. The patient may have cool and clammy skin, weak pulse, and shallow breathing
- If not treated, the victim's condition can worsen with the body temperature rising, and the victim may suffer heat stroke

## HEAT STROKE (Also called SUN STROKE)

- True life-threatening condition
- Victim loses the capacity to keep their body temperature down to safe levels
- The body becomes a "crock pot." The body's cells, especially the brain cells, literally cook or stew. Left uncorrected, brain damage and death are common
- **WATCH FOR THESE SIGNALS:** Hot, flushed, dry skin along with a bounding pulse. Initial symptoms may include headache, dizziness, and dry mouth. These symptoms may rapidly lead to loss of consciousness and seizures.