

HEAT EMERGENCY ADVISORY

I. PURPOSE

This advisory provides information for the patients and staff on methods to maintain a state of environmental wellbeing in situations where air conditioning is not available throughout the entire provider facility and/or a heat emergency is in effect.

II. DEFINITION

When the unit temperature registers 86 degrees or above and or the outside heat index registers 90 degrees or above, this should be considered a heat emergency. However, comfort levels can be negatively impacted at temperatures below what is set out in this definition. The instructions and procedures are suggestions that can be followed to make staff and patients as comfortable as possible.

REPORTING HEAT EMERGENCY- Should be reported to the Director or Assistant Director and the Nurse Administrator so that medical/nursing staff are alerted to the possibility that orders may be required.

SPECIAL INSTRUCTIONS and PROCEDURES:

1. Additional juice and ice water should be made available for patients.
2. Consider cold meals (i.e. salads, cold cuts) in place of hot meals.
3. Patients shall be encouraged to wear loose, comfortable clothing.
4. Patients shall wear hats and sunscreen when exposed to sun.
5. Rest periods or low energy activities should be encouraged.
6. Encourage patients to take cool showers in the early afternoon and before bed.
7. Use of area fans where available and electric source can handle extra load.
8. Activities such as movie theatre trips, local pool/beach should be considered.
9. At night, doors can be left open to take advantage of cooler air, if applicable to facility.
10. All patients shall be observed for possible reactions to heat. Vital signs and symptoms shall be recorded and report to MD if changes are observed.
11. Patients with respiratory problems should be allowed to sleep in areas that have air conditioning, if possible.
12. All patients taking Lithium shall be closely observed. Sweating, which is associated with sodium loss and dehydration predisposes one toward increased Lithium levels and subsequent lithium toxicity.
13. All pharmaceuticals should be stored in a room with air conditioning, if possible.
14. Medical staff shall proceed with emergency first aid if heat strokes occur.

Attachment A

HEATSTROKE- FIRST AID TREATMENT - HEATSTROKE IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY

Transfer to a general hospital for continued treatment immediately. In the meantime begin:

1. Immediate cooling:
 - a. Remove from heat
 - b. Remove clothes
 - c. Spray water over body and fan to evaporate water or rub ice or put in ice
 - d. Bath
2. Maintain Airway
3. Massage limbs to reduce vasoconstriction
4. Take temperature every 10 minutes
5. Continue cooling during transfer.

NO MEDICATION

Attachment B

HEATSTROKE RECOGNITION

Signs and Symptoms

Nausea, Anorexia, Anxiety, Headache, Any change from usual mental state, Dizziness
Weakness, Listlessness, Drowsiness, Disorientation, Disassociation, Apathy, Unresponsiveness
Irritability, Aggressiveness, Irrationality, Emotional liability, Delirium, Mania, Psychosis,
Tremor, Ataxia

Onset over few hours- or sudden collapse

Temperature over 104 degrees F

Skin hot and may be sweating

Grand mal seizures

Attachment C

DIFFERENTIATING HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	HEAT CRAMPS	HEAT EXHAUSTION	HEAT STROKES
Temperature	Normal	Mild elevation	104 degrees or above
Blood Pressure	Normal	Slightly low	Low
Pulse	Normal	Rapid	Rapid
Respiration	Normal	Rapid	Rapid and weak if person is active. Slow if person is inactive
Skin	Cool, pale	Cool, pale	Very Hot
Diaphoresis (Sweating)	Present	Profuse	Profuse if active. Absent of sweat when inactive
Muscle Cramps	Present	May occur	Absent
Central Nervous System Manifestations	None	Dizziness, fainting, headache, weakness, irritability	Agitation , confusion, seizures, apathy or coma
Gastrointestinal Manifestations	Mild nausea	Nausea, vomiting	Diarrhea may occur
Serum sodium	Normal to low <u>Treatment</u> Sodium replacement, rest, preventive education	Low or high <u>Treatment</u> Sodium and water replacement, rest in a cool environment, preventive education	Low or high <u>Treatment</u> Rapid cooling, supportive care, preventive education

HEAT RELATED ILLNESS ARE PREVENTABLE

A physician must be notified immediately for any of the above symptoms