

WORST-CASE SCENARIO®

HOW TO TREAT SUNBURN

- 1 Get out of the sun immediately.**
- 2 Do not apply suntan lotion, oil, petroleum jelly, ointment, or butter to the burn.**

These will make the symptoms worse and prevent the skin from cooling in the air.
- 3 Apply a cool compress.**

Take off your shirt and soak it in cold water. Dunk it in a water hazard if no other source of water is available. Wear the shirt or hold it on the burned area. (Continue to apply the cool compress once you are at home, or take a cool bath.)
- 4 Drink water.**

Drinking 32 to 64 ounces of water will prevent dehydration and promote sweating.
- 5 Use a soothing gel or lotion on the skin to cool the burned area.**

Aloe works best. If aloe plants grow nearby, break off a leaf and squeeze the gel out directly.
- 6 Seek medical attention immediately if you experience serious symptoms.**

Side effects to watch for include faintness; dizziness; a fast pulse or fast breathing; pale, clammy, or cold skin; sensitivity to light; rash; fever; nausea; or chills.

Be Aware

- Avoid sun exposure between 10:00 A.M. and 2:00 P.M. standard time because the sun is at its hottest during these hours. Remember that the sun's rays are stronger at high altitude and close to the equator.
- Use a sunscreen with an SPF (sun protection factor) of at least 15, and apply it at least 30 minutes prior to exposure.
- If the burn is mild, a hot shower immediately after the burn can cause peeling and actually relieve itchiness more quickly.
- Prolonged exposure to sun and heat can also cause heat exhaustion and/or heatstroke. Heat exhaustion is usually a mild illness brought on by exposure to heat, but heatstroke, which develops beyond the point of heat exhaustion, can be fatal. Symptoms of both include fever and sweating, but an important difference is the presence of mental confusion. If the victim is confused, the illness is no longer heat exhaustion—it is heatstroke.

HOW TO TREAT HEATSTROKE

1 Immediately immerse the victim in cold water.

The core body parts (chest and abdomen) are the most important to cool. Body temperature must be reduced immediately. Heatstroke is usually fatal if not treated rapidly.

2 Remove the victim's clothing and spray the skin with cool misted water while fanning the skin.

Use this method, known as evaporative cooling, only if immersion is impossible. Do not use cold wraps with wet towels, alcohol, or ice cubes; these are not effective cooling measures.

3 Stop the cooling when the body temperature falls below 102° F.

Hypothermia may result if the victim becomes too chilled. In most cases, you will not have access to a thermometer, so continue cooling measures until safe temperatures are confirmed by a health-care professional.

4 Do not administer acetaminophen or aspirin.

Both of these drugs may worsen heatstroke: acetaminophen by damaging the liver, and aspirin by increasing core temperature.

5 Get the victim to a health professional as soon as possible.

HOW TO PREVENT HEATSTROKE

- Wear a light-colored cotton shirt.
- Wet your shirt in cool water to enhance cooling through evaporation.
- Spray misted water on your face, arms, and legs to promote cooling.
- Drink plenty of cold fluids.
- Take frequent shade breaks.