HEAT STROKE
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Heatstroke is caused by failure of the thermostat in the brain which regulates the body temperature. It is the result from prolonged exposure to high temperatures—usually in combination with dehydration—which leads to failure of the body’s temperature control system. The medical definition of heatstroke is a core body temperature greater than 105 degree Fahrenheit, with complications involving the central nervous system that occur after exposure to high temperatures.

Heat stroke is most likely to affect older people who live in apartments or homes lacking air conditioning or good airflow. Other high-risk groups include people of any age who do not drink enough water, have chronic diseases, or who drink excessive amounts of alcohol. If you live in an urban area, you may be especially prone to develop heat stroke during a prolonged heat wave, particularly if there are stagnant atmospheric conditions and poor air quality. In what is known as the “heat island effect” asphalt and concrete store heat during the day and only gradually release it at night, resulting in higher night time temperatures.

Someone can also get heat stroke after using drugs such as ecstasy. Sometimes, people get heatstroke after suffering from heat exhaustion. When someone get too dehydrated they stop sweating which means their body can’t cool down anymore, so they develop heatstroke.

Symptoms of Heat Stroke
The hallmark symptoms of heat stroke is a core body temperature above 105 degree Fahrenheit. But fainting maybe the first sign. Other symptoms may include:

- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness and light-headedness
- Lack of sweating despite of the heat
- Red, hot and dry skin
- Muscle weakness or cramps
- Nausea and vomiting
- Rapid heartbeat, which may be either strong or weak
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Behavioral changes such as confusion, disorientation, or staggering
- Seizure
- Unconsciousness
These are the six key things to look for:

1. Headache, dizziness and discomfort
2. Restlessness and confusion
3. Hot flushed and dry skin
4. A fast deterioration in the level of response
5. A full bounding pulse
6. Body temperature above 40 degree Celsius (104 degree Fahrenheit)

Preventing Heat Stroke
When the heat index is high, it is best to stay in an air-conditioned environment. If you must go outdoors, you can prevent heat stroke by taking these steps:

- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing and wide-brimmed hat
- Use a sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of 30 or more
- Drink extra fluids.

First aid for heat stroke
- Quickly move them to a cool place and remove their outer clothing but ensure you maintain their dignity
- Call for an ambulance
- Wrap them in a cold wet sheet and keep pouring cold water over until their temperature falls at least 38 degree Celsius (or 100 degree Fahrenheit). Measure this with a thermometer under their tongue or under their armpit.
- If you can’t find a sheet, fan them or sponge them down with cold water to keep them cool.
- Once their temperature seems to have gone back to normal, replace the wet sheet with a dry sheet
- While waiting for the help to arrive, keep checking their temperature, as well as their breathing, pulse and level of response.
- If they start getting hot again, repeat the cooling process to lower their temperature.
- If they lose consciousness at any point, open their airway, check their breathing and prepare to treat someone who’s become unconscious.

References: