



# HEAT EXHAUSTION

**Overexposure to high temperatures and humidity can quickly lead to heat exhaustion. It is imperative that you learn to recognize the early signs and symptoms to avoid serious consequences.**

## **What is it?**

Heat exhaustion is caused by loss of body fluids and, in rare cases, important salts. It occurs when the body is unable to maintain a normal body temperature and overheats. When the body overheats it directs most of its attention to cooling off. To maintain a normal temperature as body heat rises, vessels in the skin fill with blood, allowing heat to radiate out. With so much blood moving to the skin, less can go to the brain, muscles and other organs. Consequently, people who work in hot environments may feel tired sooner and less mentally alert.

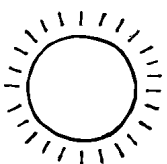
## **What are the symptoms**

Headache, muscle weakness, dizziness, extreme fatigue, clammy skin, profuse sweating and nausea.

## **What can be done to combat heat exhaustion?**

During a hot work day, always drink plenty of cool water. You may not be thirsty, but your body can still lose water in hot weather. If you feel you have heat exhaustion, you should get to a cool environment and drink juice or electrolyte solution. (Drinking too much water can lead to painful muscle cramps.) You can also use cold towels to cool down. With mild cases, most people can feel better in a few minutes. Others may require more care. If left untreated, heat exhaustion can lead to **heat stroke!**

The key symptom to look for with heat stroke is disorientation. Heat stroke is the most severe heat emergency. It is a serious medical emergency caused when body systems stop functioning. Medical assistance should be requested. Symptoms include: rapid breathing, strong pulse, high body temperature, flushed skin, disorientation, and irritable aggressive behavior.



**If you feel you are unable to continue working due to extreme heat conditions on your aircraft, you should immediately notify your captain and Inflight of the situation. A small thermometer to measure cabin temperature, to include in a written report to the airline and AFA-CWA, would be helpful.**

***Remember — If you don't report it, it didn't happen.***