

## Preventing Heat Disorders

## **Heat Stress Symptoms**

Pay close attention to the following heat-related illnesses in yourself, your students and your co-workers. These are listed in order of severity:

- 1. decreased energy
- 2. light-headedness
- 3. flushed or pale skin
- 4. nausea
- 5. headache
- 6. rapid and shallow breathing

- 7. heavy sweating
- 8. confusion
- 9. muscle cramps
- 10. vomiting
- 11. dry skin, no sweating
- 12. fainting



## Heat Disorders: What to Do



- Encourage anyone experiencing early signs of heat illness to drink more fluids and to get out of the sun. Sports drinks can replenish lost minerals. Avoid salt tablets.
- Remove excess clothing.
- If symptoms worsen, move the victim to a cool place.
- Pour cool water over the person or use cold packs.
- Keep the person lying down with feet raised.
- If the victim is vomiting, has fainted or exhibits confused, angry or strange behavior, call 911.

## Prevention

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting and lightweight clothing.
  A wide brimmed hat will protect your face and neck.
- Use sun block of 15 SPF or more and encourage students to apply it as well when going outside.
- Drink plenty of water and do not wait until you are thirsty. Avoid caffeine.
- Avoid overexertion, strenuous work and outside play during the hottest part of the day.
- If children are using playground equipment, check any metal surfaces such as slides to be sure they are not hot to the touch.
- Give yourself a chance to get used to the heat. Take several days to get used to it by gradually spending time in similar conditions.



