



Tailgate Safety Talk

Information You Can Use to Prevent Accidents & Injuries

If your fingers get singed on a steering wheel or if people start frying eggs on the sidewalk, you know it's a scorcher out there. Still, many of us refuse to cozy up to our air conditioner. Tennis lessons, soccer games, and yard work await--but so does the summer heat. Whenever the mercury rises above 80 degrees, it's difficult for your body to maintain a temperature balance. This can result in heat fatigue, heat rash, vomiting, nausea, and deadly heat stroke. Take this quiz to test your summer heat knowledge.

1. Which of the following statements is true?

- a. people who tan easily or have darker skin aren't affected by the summer heat.
- b. a sunscreen with a high sun-protection factor eliminates the risk of heat illness.
- c. if you're in good shape, you can handle the heat.
- d. none of the above.

2. A heat rash is most likely to occur:

- a. in a dry environment.
- b. in a humid environment.
- c. when swimming.
- d. at high altitudes.

3. True or False? Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition.

4. If someone has heat stroke, which of the following should you not do?

- a. move the person to a cool place.
- b. sponge off the victim with cold water.
- c. give the victim something to drink.
- d. seek medical attention immediately.

5. True or False? Children can withstand the heat better than adults?

6. When you exercise in the heat, how often should you take breaks?

- a. every 15 minutes.
- b. every half hour.
- c. every hour.
- d. whenever you feel thirsty.

7. True or False? Water is the best thirst quencher.

<Continued on Page 2>

ANSWERS

1. Answer: d. Though dark skin makes you less prone to sunburns, it doesn't protect you from hot temperatures. And being in good shape doesn't prevent your body from getting too hot and losing fluids.

2. Answer: b. A heat rash - or prickly heat - occurs when high humidity doesn't allow sweat to evaporate. According to Dr. Alan Menter, chief of dermatology at Baylor Medical Center in Dallas, sweat that lingers on clothing or between two layers of skin can clog sweat ducts. This leads to inflammation and possible infection. Corn starch is an excellent remedy. "Ointment-based greasy application further clogs the pores and makes it worse," Menter warns.

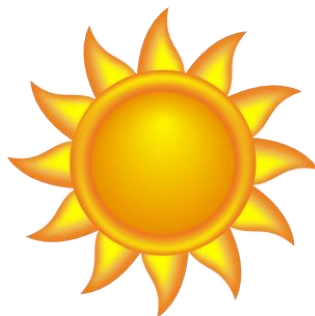
3. True. People with heat stroke have a high body temperature and their body goes into shock. Left untreated, people die. "When your body loses that much water, it can't regulate temperature and overheats," says Laurie Meyer, an author on nutrition.

4. Answer: c. Heat stroke causes nausea, delirium and possibly vomiting, and your organs shut down. "At this point, the body won't absorb water fast enough," Meyer says. "Drinking could lead to more nausea and vomiting."

5. False. Children lose water at the same rate as adults. But since they have less body mass, the effects are more severe. "Kids can become dehydrated very quickly," says Dr. Robert Shulman, director of the nutritional support team at Texas Children's Hospital. The best option? "Fill kids up with plenty of water before they go out," he says.

6. Answer: a. During exercise, your body produces metabolic heat--heat from the inside. When it's hot outside, no heat transfer can occur, and your body overheats like a high-revving car engine. "Drink water every 15 minutes," Meyer says. "Just 4 to 8 ounces of water can replenish lost fluids." Otherwise, you can get heat cramps or painful muscle spasms.

7. True. Sports drinks and fruit juices are OK, but you have to drink more of them to get a comparable amount of water into your system. Their high-sugar content slows absorption into the body and increases urination, depleting your body's water resources. Soda, coffee, and tea have caffeine, a diuretic, which removes fluid from your body. And despite what bleacher bums at baseball games say, the alcohol in beer contributes to dehydration.



Users of this tailgate talk are advised to determine the suitability of the information as it applies to local situations and work practices and its conformance with applicable laws and regulations.