

WI DPH-Southern Regional Office

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps usually affect people who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. This sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture levels. Low salt levels in muscles causes painful cramps. Heat cramps may also be a symptom of heat exhaustion.

Symptoms

Muscle pain or spasms usually in the abdomen, arms, or legs.

First Aid

Persons with heat cramps should:

- Stop all activity and sit in a cool place.
- Drink clear juice or a sports beverage.
- Do not return to strenuous activity for a few hours after the cramps subside because further exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.
- Seek medical attention if any of the following apply:
 - The person has heart problems.
 - The person is on a low-sodium diet.
 - The cramps do not subside within one hour.

