

Heat stroke

Reviewed by the [BabyCenter Medical Advisory Board](#)

I've heard that if my toddler gets too hot, he could suffer heat stroke. What is that?

Heat stroke is a life-threatening condition that occurs when a person becomes extremely overheated. Basically, the body's temperature rises while its ability to cool off shuts down. Babies and young children are especially vulnerable to heat stroke. Your toddler might get heat stroke if he plays outside in very hot weather, for example, especially if he becomes [dehydrated](#) or if he's dressed too warmly. A severe [sunburn](#) can also make him susceptible. Leaving him in a parked car — which you should *never* do — would put him at risk, too. (In fact, heat stroke can occur within minutes in a car, where the temperature quickly climbs much higher than the outside temperature.)

How will I know if my toddler has heat stroke?

Your toddler may first show signs of heat exhaustion, which is milder. These symptoms include thirst, fatigue, leg or stomach cramps, and cool, moist skin.

If heat exhaustion progresses to heat stroke, your child may have any of the following symptoms:

- A temperature of 103 degrees Fahrenheit (39.4 degrees Celsius) or higher — but no sweating
- Hot, red, dry skin
- Rapid pulse
- Restlessness
- Confusion
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Vomiting
- Rapid, shallow breathing
- Lethargy (Your toddler might not respond as strongly as usual when you call his name or tickle his skin, for example.)
- Unconsciousness

You'll also want to watch for signs of [dehydration](#).

What should I do if I suspect my child has heat stroke?

You'll need to bring your toddler's internal temperature down as quickly as possible. Time is of the essence — a child suffering from severe heat stroke can easily slip into unconsciousness.

First, call 911. Then undress your toddler completely and lay him down in a cool area. (If you're outside in the sun, find some shade, but if at all possible, move him into a cool room.) While you're waiting for the ambulance, sponge down his body with a washcloth or rag dipped in cool water, and fan him. (You can use an electric fan or simply fan him with something in your hand, like a magazine.) Talk to him reassuringly to keep him calm. Don't give him anything to drink. And though you may be tempted to give your toddler acetaminophen (Tylenol), it won't lower a temperature caused by heat stroke.

If your child is showing signs of heat exhaustion but it hasn't progressed to heat stroke, bring him indoors — to an air conditioned room, if possible — and give him plenty of liquids (not too sugary or too cold, though, or he might get stomach cramps). You might also give him a cool bath or shower

and keep him indoors for the rest of the day. If he doesn't seem to be improving quickly, take him to the doctor or emergency room.

How can I prevent my toddler from getting heat stroke?

Keep in mind that it doesn't take much to bring on overheating, especially if your child is active on a hot day or he hasn't acclimated himself to the hot weather (in the beginning of summer, for example). Dress him in lightweight, loose-fitting clothing. Make sure he drinks more fluids than usual on hot days and takes frequent breaks. When the temperature is really severe, keep him indoors. (If your home is very hot and you don't have air conditioning, seek comfort at a public library, the mall, or a community shelter provided especially for relief from the heat.)

(Source www.babycenter.com)



On cable TV they have a weather channel - 24 hours of weather. We had something like that where I grew up. We called it a window.

- Dan Spencer

It's so hot ...

- I saw a dog chasing a cat and they were both walking
- The birds have to use potholders to pull worms out of the ground
- Chickens are laying hard boiled eggs
- Potatoes cook underground
- Everyone is wearing "sweat" pants
- All the corn on the stalks started popping