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## HEAT DISORDERS—HEAT CRAMPS

There are various heat stress disorders that may affect us as the summer heat increases the temperature and humidity. During the summer, we must all take precautions to ensure our bodies don't get over heated.

Today we'll look at heat cramps. Heat cramps are brief, severe cramps or spasms in the muscles of the legs, arms, or abdomen that may occur during or after vigorous exercise or working in extreme heat. The sweating that occurs causes the body to lose salts and fluids. This low level of salts causes the muscles to cramp. Although painful, heat cramps aren't serious.

Even though you may be drinking water or other fluids, you can still have heat cramps as it is not dehydration, it is the loss of salts and other electrolytes such as calcium from your body.

If you suffer from heat cramps you should:

- Rest briefly and cool down.
- Drink clear juice or an electrolyte-containing sports drink such as Gatoraid.
- Do range-of-motion stretching and gentle massaging of the affected muscle group.

Heat cramps can be very painful, but they can be treated easily with the replacement of the electrolytes and generally are not serious.