



MAN IT IS HOT OUTSIDE!

YES, it is hot all over the southeast. The heat we are experiencing this year can be and is very dangerous. Working outside in the heat can cause you to overheat and bring on heat stroke or heat exhaustion. With either one of these events, first aid to the victim needs to be immediate.

So, what do I do? If the victim has incredibly hot skin, dizziness and fainting, extreme fatigue, nausea, vomiting, rapid heartbeat, mental confusion, seizures, no sweating and severe headache, that person is suffering from heat stroke. You should immediately move them indoors or at least reduce external temperatures by moving them into a shaded area. A call to 911 should be made quickly.

As uncomfortable as this may be, considering we have both male and female cadets and senior airmen, excess outer layers of clothing should be removed. Any tight fitting or restrictive clothing could hold heat and worsen the condition.

If possible, the victim should be put in cool water. If you are out in the field, look for streams and ponds. Getting someone in this cool water helps cool the body core. Another way to cool them off is with the evaporation method. Soak a sheet in water, wrap the victim, then fan them or place them in front of a fan. Ice packs placed in the armpits, back, neck and in the groin area will also help cool the victim. Finally, make sure they drink fluids. Water may be the best, but sports drinks will help as well.

While you are waiting on emergency personnel to arrive continue to monitor the patient. In some extreme cases you may need to render CPR. Every member of CAP should be as proficient as possible in CPR. If you are not comfortable with your ability to render aid, consider enrolling in a CPR class in your area. Some medical clinics periodically offer these training events as do American Heart Association offices and of course the Red Cross.

While we have just touched on one of the conditions that excessive heat can bring, it is imperative that all CAP members, cadet and senior, become better and more knowledgeable at rendering first aid for heat related conditions. Stay cool!

Lt Col Gary Pickens
Health Services Officer, Southeast Region

