

Yass River – Nanima Brigade

Training – First Aid

Exposure

Signs and Symptoms of Exposure

Key points include:

- Exposure is the body being subjected to extreme environmental heat or cold with subsequent illnesses affecting the body

!! For purposes of this session, only heat related exposure will be looked at.

- Exposure to heat can result in heat exhaustion and heat stroke and is usually brought on by dehydration

- Normal body temperature 37°C

- Heat stress:

- o Headache
- o Drowsiness and fatigue
- o Nausea
- o Urine – dark yellow
- o Muscle cramps

- Heat exhaustion:

- o Pale, rapid weak pulse, maybe flushed if serious
- o Sweating profusely
- o Nausea and possible vomiting
- o Moderately elevated temperature
- o Exhausted and weak

- Heat stroke:

- o Hot dry flushed skin
- o Rapid strong pulse
- o Incoherent
- o Unconscious
- o Death imminent in most cases unless treated URGENTLY.

Equipment, Tools and Techniques for Exposure

Key points include:

- Look, listen, feel and check for injuries
- Water to cool or warm, blankets for warming

- Shelter and shade
- Removing any tight clothing or jewellery
- Blankets and packing to increase comfort
- Immobilising the casualty.

Treatment and Management of Exposure

Key points to cover include:

- Applying DRSABCD (control any bleeding)
- Heat stress:
 - o Move to a cool place
 - o Rest and cool the casualty, loosen clothing to increase evaporation of sweat
 - o Have casualty sip plenty of water regularly, do not allow gulping as it may induce vomiting.
- Heat exhaustion:
 - o Rest and cool the casualty, loosen clothing to increase evaporation of sweat
 - o Have casualty sip water regularly, do not allow gulping as it may induce vomiting. If repeated vomiting treat as heat stroke
 - o Casualty requires long period of rest
- Heat stroke:
 - o Rest and immediate cooling is vital
 - o Loosen clothing and cool skin with wet towels or sponge water onto skin
 - o Place icepacks in groins and armpits
 - o Allow small sips of water
 - o Fan casualty to increase evaporation cooling
 - o Elevate legs
 - o Casualty requires hospitalisation **urgently**
- Rest and reassurance
- Continual monitoring
- Be prepared for CPR if needed
- Manage shock once casualty stabilised.