



## FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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### **HOT DAYS PREDICTED THIS WEEK AND WEEKEND** **TIPS TO KEEP THE HEAT FROM BEATING YOU DOWN!!**

**June 15, 2017** (Fort Worth, Texas) As temperatures in Fort Worth look to be the hottest yet this summer, the number of heat-related emergency medical calls are expected to increase. While longer days and warmer weather makes more time outdoors appealing, prolonged or intense exposure to hot temperatures can cause heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heatstroke.

To help assure patient safety, MedStar upgrades response priorities for any patient that is outdoors in unprotected areas to prevent potential for heat-related complications when the heat index exceeds 105 degrees.

“Heat exhaustion occurs when the body loses large amounts of water and salt through excessive sweating, particularly through hard physical labor or exercise,” said Dr. Neal Richmond, Medical Director for MedStar in Fort Worth. This loss of essential fluids can disturb circulation and interfere with brain function. Children and the elderly are especially susceptible, Dr. Richmond added.

Heatstroke is a life-threatening problem that occurs when the body suffers from long, intense exposure to heat and loses its ability to cool itself. Heatstroke occurs when the body fails to regulate its own temperature and body temperature continues to rise.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include flu-like symptoms such as paleness, sweating, nausea, and vomiting.

“Often, we respond to people who are going about their regular work or daily activities, but don’t realize how quickly heat can affect them,” said Macara Trusty, a Paramedic with MedStar. “If you’re going to be doing anything outdoors during the high-temperature summer months, we recommend drinking plenty of water and frequently cooling off in the shade or indoors.”

Untreated heat exhaustion can progress to heatstroke suddenly and cause unconsciousness within minutes. Some of the most common signs of heatstroke include confusion, vomiting, hot, flushed, dry skin, rapid heart rate, decreased sweating, shortness of breath, decreased urination, increased body temperature (104 to 106 degrees Fahrenheit), or convulsions.

Heatstroke is a medical emergency. If you or someone you know starts experiencing any of the symptoms above, immediately call 9-1-1.

While heatstroke and heat exhaustion are common this time of year, they can be easily prevented.

- **Hydrate:** Drink plenty of water during the day, especially if you are engaged in any strenuous activity. Sports drinks are a good choice if you're exercising or working in hot conditions, but water is a good way to hydrate as well.
- **Ventilate:** Stay in a place where there is plenty of air circulating to keep your body cool. If you are indoors and don't have access to air conditioning, open windows and use a fan.
- **Cover Up:** Wear light-colored and loose-fitting clothing to avoid absorbing the sun's light and trapping heat. Wear a hat to shield yourself from the sun, but once you feel yourself getting warm, remove any items covering your head which can trap heat close to your body.
- **Limit Activity:** Heatstroke can occur in less than an hour when you are participating in strenuous activity during a hot day. If you feel yourself getting hot or light-headed, stop your activity and rest in a cool place out of the sun. Be sure to drink water or a sports drink before, during, and after any strenuous activity.
- **Check on Loved One's:** The elderly are especially vulnerable to heat related emergencies. Many elderly residents are not aware of how hot it may get in their residence. Call on older friends and family members regularly to assure they are doing OK.
- **Kids in Hot Cars:** Every summer, police, fire departments and MedStar respond to calls where a child is left in a hot car. Too often, these calls end in tragedy! **DO NOT** leave children unattended in cars and be sure your vehicles are secured to prevent a curious child from becoming trapped in the car on a hot day.
  - *These recommendations are also good for your pets!!*

#### **About MedStar**

Responding to over 135,000 calls each year, MedStar Mobile Healthcare is the exclusive emergency and non-emergency ambulance service provider to over 978,000 residents throughout Fort Worth and 14 other Tarrant County cities including Haltom City, Burleson, Saginaw, White Settlement, Forest Hill, River Oaks, Lake Worth, Sansom Park, Westworth Village, Blue Mound, Edgecliff Village, Haslet, Lakeside and Westover Hills. Established in 1986, MedStar is governed by the Metropolitan Area EMS Authority board of directors, is one of only 132 ambulance services in the country to receive national accreditation by the Commission on Accreditation of Ambulance Services. MedStar was named the 2013 Paid EMS Provider of the Year by the National Association of EMTs and EMS World Magazine.