



ARGYLL OUTDOOR NAVIGATION

COLLAPSE ON THE HILLS

EFFECTS OF EXTREME AND PROLONGED EXERTION

There is a possibility that you may come across someone, or a member of your group suffering from fatigue, dehydration and is reluctant to carry on. This is because they are exhausted, thirsty and fed up.

Indications are:

- Slowing down
- Gasping for air
- Feeling weak
- Feeling dizzy
- Feeling or even being sick
- Possible headaches.

If you come across anyone or a member of your group having these symptoms, then you will have to ask some questions.

1. What have they had to eat.

For prolonged activity carbohydrates are the most important, then fats and protein.

One of the rules to keep you going is to make sure that you take enough food and fluids. Eat and drink a little but often, most hill walkers carry easy accessible snack

2. How much have they had to drink

Even on short walks you will require at least a litre of water. For longer walks 2 litres maybe more depending on the weather.

3. Salt intake

When you are sweating a lot you are losing salt which needs to be replaced. This can be replaced with likes of crisps, sandwiches or even some sports drinks.

If the answer is no to anyone of the above questions then they should sit, drink, eat and rest.

The person suffering should be given a warm drink containing sugar and salt at least 1-2 cups. Another thing that could be given would be a drink made with an oxo, or beef stock cube.

CAUSES OF HEAT EXHAUSTION

4. Not enough food and drink intake

For long, strenuous walks you will need at least 4500 calories to keep you going.

The intake of fats, carbohydrates and protein should be mixed.

5. Over exertion

Physical exhaustion is a combination of dehydration and lack of salt this, if not treated will lead to collapse. One way to spot the onset of dehydration is to check the colour of your urine, if its dark in colour you need to take on more fluids.

Also exhaustion is likely to be mental as well as physical and they are likely to show no interest of what is going on or their surroundings.

With these symptoms they could pose a danger to themselves or the group.

There is also a possibility they could suffer from one or more of the following:

- General injuries.
- Hypothermia
- Cold damage.

First aid:

- *Stop immediately and rest.*
- *Replace fluids, food and salt.*
- *Shelter from the weather.*

6. Heat cramps

Often this happens as muscle spasms in the stomach and limbs especially the thigh and calve muscles. This is caused by salt deficiency.

7. Heat stroke

This is an extremely dangerous condition. Symptoms are sweating stops and the body temperature control collapses causing high body temperature (105F-40C). This is caused by salt deficiency.

Indications:

- Hot flushed and dry face.

- Dizziness.
- Headaches, can be very severe.
- Restlessness.
- Breathing heavy.
- Fast pulse
- Unconsciousness – could be quick.

First aid:

- Conscious: lie the casualty down head and shoulders raised and supported.
- Unconscious: put casualty in the recovery position.
- Loosen or remove clothing.
- Sponge down especially the head and face.
- Shade from the sun – fan to cool.
- When temperature falls, cover with light dry clothing.
- Arrange evacuation and urgent medical assistance.

