



Safety Talk: Heat Stress



Thousands of workers become sick every year from overexposure to heat. Some workers have even died from heat-related illnesses.

To protect yourself and your coworkers, it is important that you recognize the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

IT IS IMPORTANT TO RECOGNIZE THE SYMPTOMS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION AND HEAT STROKE

Heat Exhaustion

- Headaches, dizziness, or fainting
- Extreme sweating, wet skin
- Irritability, confusion
- Nausea or vomiting
- Weakness or fatigue
- Fast and shallow breathing
 - Immediately get to a cool, shaded area
 - Remove or loosen clothing and drink cool water

Heat Stroke

- Hot, dry, clammy skin
- Elevated body temperature
- Hallucinations
- Slurred speech
- Unconsciousness
- Throbbing headache
- **Heat stroke is a medical emergency! Call 123 or 2-8181 if you witness anyone suffering these symptoms!**
- While waiting for help:
 - Move the worker to a cool, shaded area
 - Spray, sponge, or shower with water and then fan them
 - Only administer water if conscious and alert

RISK FACTORS FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES

Environmental Factors:

- Hot temperature
- High humidity
- Sunlight
- Air movement

Personal Factors:

- Hydration level
- Level of activity
- Type and amount of clothing worn
- Conditioning, acclimation
- Pre-existing personal conditions

HOW TO CONTROL RISK FACTORS

- Air conditioning
- Fans and blowers for air movement
- Block out direct sunlight
- Incorporate frequent recovery breaks
- Providing cool break areas
- Recognizing the symptoms of heat-related illnesses
- Hydration:
 - Water is best, drink water every 15 minutes
 - If you're thirsty, then you may already be slightly dehydrated

HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES:

1. Drink fluids regularly and frequently.
2. Avoid drinking alcohol, caffeine, or other diuretics.
3. Wear natural-fiber fabrics, such as cotton.
4. Avoid wearing synthetic fabrics such as nylon.
5. When working outdoors: cover skin with loose-fitting, light-colored clothes.
6. Avoid wearing hats when working indoors.
7. Take regular rest breaks in a shaded or cool area.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES ARE PREVENTABLE

Do not over stress your body in hot environments

Listen to your body and stop working if you feel any symptoms of heat-related illnesses!