

Hot Weather Safety



Tips to Reduce the Risk of Heat-Induced Illnesses

As summer begins and temperatures rise, it is important that workers take extra precautions to reduce the risk of heat-induced illness. If you are working in hot environments you should...

- ❖ Drink appropriate liquids before you become thirsty to maintain a proper fluid balance. If you wait until you are thirsty, you may be at risk of dehydration because by the time your body signals you are thirsty, you are 2-percent dehydrated. Once you are dehydrated, it is difficult to replace the fluids. Drink cool water rather than hot or very cold water. Cool water absorbs more quickly into the body.
- ❖ Avoid caffeinated and alcoholic beverages.
- ❖ Block out direct sun or other heat sources when needed.
- ❖ If possible, perform strenuous work during cool periods.
- ❖ Wear light-colored loose-fitting clothing. It is important to wear a hat with a three-inch brim when you are in the sun. Avoid covering your neck because that's where you get a lot of heat loss. To cool down put a moist towel around your neck.
- ❖ Your diet and metabolic load also influence your heat threshold. Eat lighter during the summer, including fruits, vegetables, salads and proteins.
- ❖ Almost everyone can adjust to heat exposure. It normally takes five to seven days for your body to adjust to the heat and for you to adjust with less strain and distress. If possible, a gradual adjustment will allow you to acclimate to the heat.

Signs, Symptoms, and First Aid for Heat-Induced Illnesses

It is important to know the signs and symptoms of heat-induced illness and the proper action to take to correct the situation.

- ❖ **HEAT STROKE IS LIFE-THREATENING** and occurs when the body cannot regulate temperature and sweating is inadequate. The skin is hot and dry. The body's temperature is 106°F or more. There can be mental confusion, a delirious state, convulsions or unconsciousness. **SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE IMMEDIATELY.** First aid should include relocating the person to a cool area, soaking the clothing and fanning to increase body cooling.
- ❖ Heat exhaustion occurs when there is a large loss of fluids by sweating and unbalanced replacement of fluids. Treatment should include removing the person to a cool area and having him or her drink liquids.
- ❖ Heat Cramps are muscle spasms which occur when a person sweats profusely. The person should stop any activity and drink liquids.
- ❖ Fainting may occur when blood vessels in the lower extremities dilate and cause inadequate circulation to the brain. After lying down, the person should quickly recover.
- ❖ Heat rash occurs when evaporation does not easily remove sweat from the skin's surface. The sweat ducts become clogged and a skin rash appears. Resting in a cool spot and regular bathing can prevent this condition.