

July – Heat Illness Prevention

Hot summer months pose special hazards for people working in hotter temperatures. Workers are prone to heat stress in various high temperature settings. Heat-related illness may initially manifest itself as a rash or cramps but can quickly escalate to heat exhaustion and heat stroke if simple preventative measures are not followed.

What is Heat Stress?

- Heat stress occurs when the body is unable to cool itself by sweating.
- Heat stress can lead to heat-related illnesses such as heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:

- Headache, dizziness, lightheadedness, fainting.
- Weakness and moist skin.
- Mood changes, irritability, confusion.
- Nausea, vomiting.

Symptoms of Heat Stroke:

- Dry, hot skin with no sweating.
- Mental confusion or loss of consciousness.
- Seizures or convulsions.
- Note: Heat stroke can be fatal, act quickly!

Preventing Heat-Related Stress and Illness:

- Know the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.
- Block out sun or other heat sources.
- Use fans or air conditioning units.
- In high heat, drink 1 cup of water every 15 minutes.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, or heavy meals.
- Wear sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher and reapply every 2 hours.

Treating Heat-Related Stress and Illness:

• If a worker exhibits signs of heat stress or a heat illness, seek medical attention immediately. It might be as simple as stopping, getting some water, and cooling down.

While Waiting for Emergency Response Teams:

- Move worker to a cool, shaded area.
- Loosen or remove heavy clothing.
- Provide cool drinking water.

Quiz:

- What is a symptom of Heat Exhaustion? ______
- Heat stroke can be fatal. T F
- What is a step to take while waiting for EMS?

| Name: | Date: |
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| HEAT EXHAUSTION | OR STROKE |
|--|--|
| Faint or dizzy Excessive sweating | Throbbing headache No sweating |
| Cool, pale,clammy skin | Body temperature above 103° Red, hot, dry skin |
| Nausea or vomiting Rapid, weak pulse | Nausea or vomiting Rapid, strong pulse |
| Muscle cramps — | ——— May lose consciousness |
| Get to a cooler, air conditioned place Drink water if fully conscious | CALL 9-1-1 Take immediate action to cool |
| Take a cool shower or use cold compresses | the person until help arrives |