

Heat Illness: Symptoms and Prevention

Heat-Related Disorders

Heat Stroke occurs when the body no longer sweats and body temperature reaches dangerous levels. Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Dry, hot reddish skin and lack of sweating
- High body temperature
- Strong, rapid pulse
- Chills
- Confusion
- Slurred speech

Heat Exhaustion is the body's response to the loss of water and salt, typically through sweating. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Excessive sweating
- Weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness and/or confusion
- Clammy skin
- Muscle cramps
- Flushed complexion

Heat Cramps are painful cramps in the body's muscles due to low salt levels and are typically caused by excessive sweating. Symptoms of heat cramps include:

- Muscle pain usually in the abdomen, arm or legs.
- Muscle spasms usually in the abdomen, arm or legs.

Heat Rash is an irritation of the skin caused by excessive sweating. Symptoms of heat rash include:

- Red cluster of pimples or small blisters
- Usually on neck and upper chest, groin area, under the breasts, and in elbow creases.

Ten Hot Weather Safety Tips:

1. **Stay hydrated.** Drink plenty of fluids; drink about 16 ounces before starting and 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes.
2. **Avoid dehydrating liquids.** Alcohol, coffee, tea and caffeinated soft drinks can hurt more than help.
3. **Wear protective clothing.** Lightweight, light-colored and loose-fitting clothing helps protect against heat. Change clothing if it gets completely saturated.

4. **Pace yourself.** Slow down and work at an even pace. Know your own limits and ability to work safely in heat.
5. **Schedule frequent breaks.** Take time for rest periods and water breaks in a shaded or air conditioned area.
6. **Use a damp rag.** Wipe your face or put it around your neck.
7. **Avoid getting sunburn.** Use sunscreen and wear a hat if working outside.
8. **Be alert to signs of heat-related illness.** Know what to look for and check on other workers that might be at high risk.
9. **Avoid direct sun.** Find shade or block out the sun if possible.
10. **Eat smaller meals.** Eat fruits high in fiber and natural juice. Avoid high protein foods.

Attendees:

NOTE: Always promote a discussion on any of the topics covered in the Tool Box Talks. Should any question arise that you cannot answer, don't hesitate to contact your Employer.

