PREVENT HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

Wearing PPE increases your risk for heat-related illnesses.

TAKE TIME TO ACCLIMATIZE.

Work shorter shifts until your body has adjusted to the heat.

STAY WELL HYDRATED.

Drink often, before you get thirsty.

WATCH FOR SIGNS OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES.

Designate a buddy and ask how they feel periodically.

TAKE TIME TO REST AND COOL DOWN.

Sit somewhere cool, rest, and rehydrate frequently.

For more information visit the NIOSH Heat Stress topic page: http://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/

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DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health

NIOSH

Fast Facts

Protecting Yourself from

Heat Stress

Heat stress, from exertion or hot environments, places workers at risk for illnesses such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, or heat cramps.

Heat Stroke

A condition that occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature, and can cause death or permanent disability.

Symptoms

- High body temperature
- Confusion
- Loss of coordination
- Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Throbbing headache
- Seizures, coma

First Aid

- Request immediate medical assistance.
- Move the worker to a cool, shaded area.
- Remove excess clothing and apply cool water to their body.

Heat Exhaustion

The body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through sweating.

Symptoms

- Rapid heart beat
- Heavy sweating
- Extreme weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness
- Nausea, vomiting
- Irritability
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Slightly elevated body temperature

First Aid

- Rest in a cool area.
- Drink plenty of water or other cool beverages.
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath.

Heat Cramps

Affect workers who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. Sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture levels.

Symptoms

- Muscle cramps, pain, or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs

First Aid

- Stop all activity, and sit in a cool place.
- Drink clear juice or a sports beverage, or drink water with food.
  - Avoid salt tablets.
- Do not return to strenuous work for a few hours after the cramps subside.
- Seek medical attention if you have the following: heart problems, are on a low-sodium diet, or if the cramps do not subside within one hour.

Protect Yourself

Avoid heavy exertion, extreme heat, sun exposure, and high humidity when possible. When these cannot be avoided, take the following preventative steps:

- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers for signs or symptoms of heat illnesses.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing such as cotton.
  - Avoid non-breathable synthetic clothing.
- Gradually build up to heavy work.
- Schedule heavy work during the coolest parts of day.
- Take more breaks when doing heavier work, and in high heat and humidity.
  - Take breaks in the shade or a cool area.
- Drink water frequently. Drink enough water that you never become thirsty.
- Be aware that protective clothing or personal protective equipment may increase the risk of heat-related illnesses.

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