



Heat Stress

When your body is exposed to heat, your system can become stressed to the point where it cannot effectively deal with it.

Problem	Severity	Signs & Symptoms	Treatment
heat rash	mild	* rash * discomfort	* change clothes * use powder or medicated cream
heat cramps	mild	* cramps in muscle groups such as back, legs, and primarily in the abdomen	* take electrolyte tablets, drinks with electrolytes, or even just potato chips or pretzels
heat exhaustion	serious	* profuse sweating * dizziness * nausea * weakness and fatigue * ringing in the ears * intense headaches	* rest in the shade or air conditioning * drink plenty of water
heat stroke	severe (will result in death if it's not treated)	* red, patchy, dry skin * maybe altered behavior * increasing disorientation * excessive body temperature (core temperature in excess of 104°F)	* get immediate medical attention, as soon as possible * cool using any means possible - shade, air conditioning, removing or wetting the clothing

Heat illnesses are completely preventable.

- * Avoid drinking alcoholic beverages the night before a hot day because it will leave you somewhat dehydrated and more prone to heat sickness.
- * Get plenty of sleep and eat well.
- * Take your breaks in shady areas.
- * Drink plenty of water throughout the day - don't wait until you feel thirsty.
- * Avoid caffeine.
- * Use fans around the work area, if available.
- * Always wear a shirt, preferably of cotton material.
- * Work up to it. It can take about two weeks to get used to working in a hot environment.

Heat Stress Training Tips

- Explain company procedures for medical emergencies.
- Emphasize that heat stroke can be fatal and requires immediate treatment.
- Ask the following questions:
 - What should you do for someone who is experiencing stomach cramps on a hot day?
 - If your coworker's face is dry and red, and he is somewhat incoherent, what should you do?