

SAFETY MOMENT: HEAT STRESS

TIPS AND GUIDES FOR SUMMER SAFETY

PREVENTING HEAT-INDUCED ILLNESSES

1. Stay informed of weather conditions before starting jobs requiring physical activity or exposure to direct sunlight
2. Wear weather-appropriate clothing and avoid bulky, non-breathable equipment if possible
3. Gradually acclimate to the heat by taking regular breaks in shaded areas
4. Wear broad-spectrum sunscreen to protect the skin
5. Always monitor yourself and your coworkers for changes in behavior or symptoms of overheating
6. Drink 4-6 ounces of water every 15 minutes. Do not wait until you're thirsty to drink
7. **Remember: Water. Rest. Shade.**

SIGNS OF HEAT-INDUCED ILLNESSES

1. **Heat Rash:** Red clusters of pimples, blisters, or skin irritation caused by excessive sweating or non-breathable clothing
2. **Heat Fatigue:** Extreme tiredness and impaired mental/physical performance
3. **Heat Cramps:** Painful cramps, muscle pain, or spasms in areas such as the abdomen, arms, and legs
4. **Heat Exhaustion:** Heavy sweating, dizziness, confusion, nausea, clammy skin, flushed complexion, and fast, shallow breathing
5. **Heat Stroke:** The most severe heat-induced illness. Symptoms include throbbing headaches, chills, confusion, dizziness, slurred speech, and hallucinations. **Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability without emergency treatment**

PROPERLY TREATING HEAT STRESS

DO:

1. Stop all activity and report symptoms to supervisors immediately
2. Quickly move affected persons to a cool place, under the shade
3. Remove or loosen outer clothing to encourage airflow
4. Apply cold compresses and wipe the body with a wet cloth
5. Drink hydrating liquids such as water or oral rehydration solutions (ORS)
6. Apply dusting powder to any areas affected by heat rash
7. Call 911 and seek medical help **immediately** if symptoms worsen or if the person becomes unresponsive

DON'T:

1. Apply cold water or ice too fast as this can cause shock
2. Chug or guzzle fluids. Rather, take sips to avoid upsetting the stomach
3. Drink fluids with caffeine or alcohol. This will lead to further dehydration
4. Return to normal activity right away. Your body may need to rest and recover for up to one week

