

Heat Illness Awareness

HEAT ILLNESS DISORDERS AND SYMPTOMS

Heat Stroke – sweating stops and the body fails to regulate its temperature. Victims may die if they don't receive immediate medical treatment. Characterized by: mental confusion, fainting, or seizures; hot dry skin usually reddish in color; and high body temperature.

Heat Exhaustion – profuse sweating results in dehydration. Characterized by: fatigue, dizziness, and nausea; pale and moist skin; and possibly slightly elevated temperature.

Heat Cramps – cramping thought to be due to loss of salt through sweating. Characterized by muscle spasms in arms, legs, and abdomen during or following work activities.

Heat Syncope – dehydration while standing still causes blood pooling in lower portions of the body. Characterized by fainting while standing still.

Heat Rash – occurs under hot and humid conditions where sweat does not evaporate readily. Characterized by irritated/ itchy skin with prickly feeling and small red bumps on skin.

TREATMENTS FOR HEAT ILLNESS DISORDERS

Heat Stroke – call 911 immediately, soak victim's clothing with cool water, move victim to shaded and cool area, fan victim to increase cooling of their body.

Heat Exhaustion – have victim rest in shaded and cool place and drink fluids. Do not serve caffeinated fluids such as soft drinks, iced tea, or coffee.

Heat Cramps – have victim rest and drink non-caffeinated fluids.

Heat Syncope – have victim rest in a shaded or cool place, and drink fluids.

Heat Rash – wash and dry skin. Wear loose clothing and keep skin dry.

TREATMENTS FOR HEAT ILLNESS DISORDERS

Water Provisions - Assure employees have ready access to free, pure, suitably cool, fresh, potable water supply. Have at least one quart of water available per person per hour of work (two gallons for an eight-hour shift). Supervisors shall encourage employees to frequently consume water.

Shade Access - When temperature exceeds 85 degrees F, shade shall be present whenever employees are present. The shade shall accommodate 25% of the employees without sitting in physical contact. Below 85 degrees F, timely access to shade shall be provided upon request by employees. Employees shall be encouraged to take a cool-down rest for no less than 5 minutes when they feel the need to protect themselves from overheating.

High Temperature Procedures (95 degrees F or higher) - Effective communication (voice, electronic, observation) shall be established so employees may contact a supervisor as necessary. Employees shall be observed for signs of heat illness. Employees shall be reminded to drink plenty of water. New employees shall be closely monitored for the first two weeks of employment, unless they have been doing similar outdoor employment for 10 or more days out of the last 30 for four hours or more per day.

Training - Employee and supervisor training shall encompass designating a person to implement emergency procedures and descriptions of environment and personal risk factors for heat illness, procedures for complying with heat illness regulations, the importance of frequently consuming small quantities of water, acclimating to outdoor work in warm to hot conditions, importance of immediately reporting symptoms of heat illness to a supervisor, procedures for summoning medical assistance and clearly directing emergency responders to the work location or how to transport employees to a medical service provider, and methods for monitoring weather reports and how to respond to hot weather advisories.