



SUMMER SURVIVAL!

PREVENT HEAT RELATED ILLNESS.

Anyone who works in a hot environment needs to be aware of the dangers that high temperatures can present to health. Heat and humidity, combined with physical exertion, can lead to serious heat-related illnesses if the proper precautions are not taken. An awareness of these precautions is especially important during the summer months.

Heat related illnesses can include heat cramps, heat rash, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Understanding the causes and recognizing the symptoms will help you to prevent these illnesses from reaching a critical stage.

Heat Stroke -- occurs when the body's system of temperature regulation fails and body temperature rises to critical levels. This condition is caused by a combination of highly variable factors, and its occurrence is difficult to predict. Heat stroke is a medical emergency. The primary signs and symptoms of heat stroke are confusion, irrational behavior, loss of consciousness, convulsions, a lack of sweating (usually), hot, dry skin and an abnormally high body temperature, e.g., a temperature of 40°C (104°F). If body temperature gets too high, the result is death.

Heat Exhaustion -- symptoms are headache, nausea, vertigo, weakness, thirst and giddiness. Victims will typically faint. Fortunately, heat exhaustion responds readily to prompt treatment, but it should not be lightly dismissed. The victim may be injured when he or she faints. Fainting can be especially dangerous if the victim is operating machinery or controlling an operation that should not be left unattended. Because the symptoms of heat exhaustion are similar to those of heat stroke, a medical emergency, thymus be treated.

Heat Cramps -- are usually caused by performing hard physical labor in a hot environment and have been attributed to an electrolyte imbalance caused by sweating. It is

important to understand that cramps can be caused by too much or too little salt. Cramps appear to be caused by the lack of water replenishment. Heavy sweating can cause excess salt to build up in the body if the water lost through sweating is not replaced. Thirst cannot be relied on as a guide to the need for water; water must be taken every 15 to 20 minutes in hot environments.

Heat Rashes -- are the most common problem in hot work environments. Prickly heat is manifested as red blemishes and usually appears in areas where clothing is restrictive. As sweating increases, these blemishes give rise to a prickling sensation. Prickly heat occurs in skin that is persistently wetted by unevaporated sweat. Heat rash blemishes may become infected if they are not treated. In most cases, heat rashes will disappear when the affected individual returns to a cool environment.

To prevent heat-related illnesses on the job, follow these general rules:

- Wear loose-fitting clothing.
- Drink water often, not just when you are thirsty.
- Schedule hot jobs for the cooler parts of the day: early morning or late afternoon.
- Schedule routine maintenance and repair work in hot areas during cooler seasons.
- Provide additional breaks and comfortable break areas.
- Add additional personnel to reduce exposure time for each member of a crew.
- Give workers the freedom to interrupt work when they feel extreme heat discomfort.

QUESTIONS?

Call your supervisor

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