Additional Information

Federal law entitles workers to a safe workplace. For more information, visit
www.osha.gov/workers

For more information on heat stress, visit
www.osha.gov/heat

Heat Illness Prevention

**Heat Illness Prevention**

Working in the Heat:
Know the Hazards

Heat Illness

Heat exposure may result in serious illness or even death, both of which are preventable.

Responding to Heat Illness

Heat illness symptoms can range from minor heat cramps to life-threatening heat stroke. Workers should receive training on heat illness symptoms, monitoring, and actions to take. It is the employer's responsibility to ensure workers are safe from hazardous heat at work.
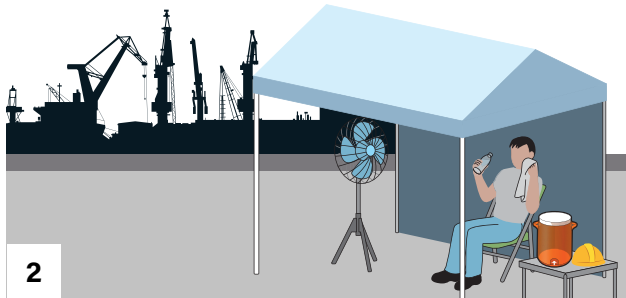
Risk Factors for Heat Illness

- High temperature and humidity, direct sun exposure, no breeze or wind
- Heavy physical labor
- No recent exposure to hot workplaces
- Low water intake
- Waterproof clothing

Signs of Heat-Related Emergencies

Heat illness can be fatal if not treated quickly.

If a worker experiences:

- Abnormal thinking or behavior
- Slurred speech
- Seizures
- Fainting
- Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin

Take these actions immediately:

- Call 911 immediately.
- Cool the worker right away with water or ice.
- Remove unnecessary clothing and give cool water to drink.
- Stay with the worker until help arrives.

Be Alert for Signs of Heat Illness

The symptoms of heat illness will intensify with time if actions are not taken to hydrate, rest, and cool down. Take action to avoid a medical emergency.

Symptoms of heat illness can include:

- Headache or nausea
- Weakness or dizziness
- Elevated body temperature
- Thirst
- Decreased urine output

First aid for heat illness:

- Give cool water to drink.
- Remove unnecessary clothing.
- Move to a cooler area.
- Cool with water, ice, or a fan.
- Do not leave alone.
- Seek medical care if needed.

Topics to Include in a Heat Illness Prevention Program

- Have a prevention plan and designate someone to oversee the program.
- Provide regular training on heat illness.
- Acclimatize workers and modify work schedules to reduce heat exposure.
- Allow frequent rest breaks.
- Identify heat hazards and check the temperature in the space before work.
- Monitor for heat illness symptoms.
- Designate a break area and encourage hydration.
- Have workers dress for the heat.
- Be prepared for an emergency.

Control Heat in the Workplace

Assess which controls may be appropriate for your workplace. These could include air conditioning, adding fans to increase air circulation, and insulating hot surfaces. As a reminder, certain personal protective equipment can increase the risk of heat illness. Frequently communicate with workers to ensure they are not experiencing symptoms of heat illness.