

Heat Stroke

High temperature and high humidity may lead to heat illness, which can be serious or even life threatening. For people working outdoors in hot weather, temperature & humidity affect how hot they feel. Temperature and humidity are factors in determining the heat index, or the "feels like" temperature. The higher the heat index, the hotter the weather feels. In addition, working in direct sunlight or wearing protective clothing can make conditions "feel" up to 15° F hotter than the heat index temperature!

Heat Stroke. The most serious heat-related disorder. It occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature. The body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106° F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes. Heat Stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.

Heat Stroke Symptoms

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Hallucinations
- Chills
- Throbbing headache
- High body temperature
- Confusion/dizziness
- Slurred speech

How to Treat Heat Stroke

Take the following steps to treat a worker with heat stroke:

- Call 911 and notify their supervisor.
- Move the sick worker to a cool shaded area.
- Cool the worker using methods such as:
 - Soaking their clothes with water.
 - Spraying, sponging, or showering them with water.
 - Fanning their body

Heat Illnesses are preventable!

Workers should avoid exposure to extreme heat, sun exposure, and high humidity when possible. When these exposures cannot be avoided, workers should take the following steps to prevent heat stress:

- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing such as cotton.
 - Avoid non-breathing synthetic clothing.
- Gradually build up to heavy work.
- Schedule heavy work during the coolest parts of day.
- Take more breaks in extreme heat and humidity.
 - Take breaks in the shade or a cool area when possible.
- Drink water frequently. Drink enough water that you never become thirsty. Approximately 1 cup every 15-20 minutes.
- Avoid alcohol, and drinks with large amounts of caffeine or sugar.
- Be aware that protective clothing or personal protective equipment may increase the risk of heat stress.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers.

Source: www.cdc.gov/niosh

Remember... Water – Rest – Shade