

Heat Related Illness Field Training

Look out for each other.

Having a heat illness is nothing to be ashamed of.

We have all been there.

Heat related illnesses are very serious. If you do not recognize the symptoms and you do not take action, heat related illnesses can easily cause death. If you see someone with symptoms, don't wait, take action.

What causes a heat illness?

1. High temperatures.
2. High humidity.
3. Direct sun exposure.
4. No breeze or wind to help keep you cool.
5. Hard physical work.
6. Low liquid intake. (Drink lots of water – even when you don't want any.)
7. Drinking alcohol before working in the sun.
8. Drinking caffeine drinks or coffee before working in the sun.
9. Not taking rest breaks.

How to keep from having heat illness.

1. Drink plenty of cool water while working outside.
2. Take breaks often when in the heat or direct sun.
 - a. Short breaks are best, it keeps your body temperature down.
 - b. Stop for water about every 15 to 20 minutes. Small amounts often.
 - c. Sit down out of the sun. Take rest breaks in the shade.
3. Stay away from alcohol in very hot weather.
 - a. Drinking at night before a hard hot day can dehydrate you quickly.
 - b. Drink lots of water during the day to offset the alcohol.
4. Stay away from caffeinated drinks.
 - a. Drinks like Red Bull have huge amounts of caffeine and can dehydrate you quickly. Many energy drinks are full of caffeine.
5. Gatorade and other thirst-quenching drinks are great if used properly.
 - a. Gatorade has lots of sugar. Gatorade also has lots of salt.
 - b. Too much Gatorade can make you sick and cause diarrhea.
 - c. If drinking Gatorade try to drink equal amounts of plain water.

Types of heat illnesses.

1. **Heat Stroke** is the most dangerous. This is a dangerous condition that can quickly lead to death. Your body is starting to shut down in an effort to control the heat. Confusion, fainting, seizures, excessive sweating or in some cases no sweating.
2. **Heat Exhaustion** is serious but generally not deadly. Heavy sweating, headache, nausea, a little vomiting, weakness, very thirsty, irritability and a fast heart rate are just a few of the signs. This is your body telling you to stop and cool off. If you don't your body will go into heat stroke, then death.
3. **Heat Cramps** are a warning. It's your body saying – wake up – I need to slow down, cool down and get out of the sun. Most workers have felt them. You will have them in the legs typically or the stomach.

How to treat heat illness.

1. **Heat Stroke** – Cool the person down **as fast as possible**. Call 911, they will need medical attention quickly. **Soak them in cold water**, use the ice water container, pour it on them. Keep them in the shade and cooled with water all over their body. Call the office. This is nothing to play with.
2. **Heat Exhaustion** – Put the person in an airconditioned vehicle to cool off. Wet rags and lots of water are needed. Get them out of the sun and in the shade. Have someone watch them constantly. Do not leave them alone. Call the office. Do not tell them to drive home. Typically, they will get better and start feeling normal in about an hour.
3. **Heat Cramps** – Take a long break, drink water, and get in the shade. It won't be long before they go away. This is just the start so catching it now with rest and shade will do the trick.

Watch out for your fellow workers.

Many times, a coworker will try to push through and keep working. Many times, they are ashamed of getting sick while you are not having problems. Watch out for them. Older employees and younger new hires are very susceptible to heat related illnesses. Do your part, help your fellow workers stay safe.