



SUMMER HEAT SAFETY



Heat Illness	Description	Treatment	Prevention
Heat Fatigue - the mildest heat illness; discomfort	crabbiness, confusion, headache and extreme tiredness	Get out of the heat and drink cool water, slow down activities until body adjusts to temperature	drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work
Heat Swelling - mild swelling of extremities due to dehydration or loss of body salt in sweat	mild swelling of extremities; similar symptoms as heat fatigue, swelling of hands feet and ankles	Wear supportive stockings, elevate legs, drink cool liquids	drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work
Heat Syncope – due to sustained exertion in heat; failure to replace water lost in sweat	brief loss of consciousness or sense of confusion; faintness, delusion, blurred vision	Lie down with feet raised, loosen clothing, place cool, wet cloth on forehead; seek medical attention if not recovered in five minutes	drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work
Heat Cramps – caused from dehydration or loss of body salt in sweat	painful muscle spasms following hard physical work; can occur during work or rest	stretch cramped muscle with one hand & gently kneed it with the other hand	drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work
Heat Rash – caused by plugging of sweat glands due to unrelieved exposure to humid heat; skin is continually wet with un-evaporated sweat	tiny red blisters on the skin and/or a pricking sensation during heat exposure	use mild drying lotions; keep skin clean to prevent infections	use mild drying lotions; keep skin clean to prevent infections
Heat Exhaustion – due to sustained exertion in heat; failure to replace water lost in sweat; may develop slowly over several days if you lose more water than you consume	sweating; dizziness; fatigue; nausea; vomiting; headache; fainting; rapid pulse; cool, moist skin; pale or flushed complexion; dilated pupils; near normal body temperature	remove to cooler environment; keep at rest on back with feet elevated; fan & sponge with cool water; 1/2 cup of water every 15 minutes; seek medical attention	drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work
Heat Stroke – caused from failure of sweating mechanism, brought about by sustained exertion in un-acclimatized workers; obesity, lack of physical fitness, recent alcohol intake, dehydration, & cardiovascular disease may be predisposing factors	no sweating (or sweating profusely); hot, dry, red skin, high & rising internal temperature, pupils constricted; mental confusion, loss of consciousness, convulsions, or coma; FATAL IF TREATMENT DELAYED!	CALL FOR MEDICAL HELP IMMEDIATELY - BRAIN DAMAGE AND DEATH MAY RESULT IF TREATMENT IS DELAYED; remove to cooler environment; keep at rest on back with feet elevated; cool by any means possible - hosing, immersion, rubbing ice on the skin, or pouring any liquid over the skin; give nothing by mouth	monitor yourself while working in severe heat; drink a cup of water just before you work in the heat & 1/2 cup every 15 minutes during work



Avoiding Heat Stress



- **Acclimatize**. Allow your body to adjust to the heat naturally and gradually; gradually increase the time you spend in the heat until you reach the total amount of time desired. Most people acclimatize to warmer temperatures in 4-7 days.
- **Drink Water**. During hot weather, the body loses up to 3 gallons of fluid a day! Drink cool water before, during and after work during heat stress conditions. Drink at least 4 oz of water every 15 - 20 minutes during work, even if you're not thirsty. Don't depend on thirst - you can lose 2-4 lbs of water before you feel thirsty!
- **Maintain Your Weight**. All weight lost due to sweating should be regained every day. Weigh yourself every day and keep weight constant by drinking plenty of water.
- **Avoid Alcohol**. It causes dehydration - an added burden for your body in hot environments. Don't drink alcohol before starting strenuous physical work or exercise.
- **Salt**. Add salt normally to your food, but avoid salt tablets which may cause over-salting. Caution: Check with your physician about salt intake - especially if you have any heart or circulatory ailments, such as hypertension.
- **Plan Ahead**. Do the most strenuous exercise or work during the cooler periods of the day. Pace yourself
- **Eat Lightly**. Eat light, nutritious meals -- preferably cold. Fatty foods are harder to digest in hot weather.
- **Rest Often**. Rest in the shade or in a well-ventilated room. Short, frequent breaks are more effective than long, infrequent ones.
- **Wear the Right Clothes**. For outdoor work wear wide-brimmed hats, sunglasses, sweatbands, and proper footgear. Breathable clothing will allow air to circulate better and sweat to evaporate faster.
- **Take Advantage of Cooling Systems and Shade**. Use fans, ventilation systems, and shade whenever possible. Cooling vests and gel headbands and wrist bands can provide additional relief.
- **Be Physically Fit**. One of the best protections against heat illness is physical fitness. A strong heart is better able 1) to pump large amounts of blood to supply oxygen to muscles and 2) to pump large amounts of hot blood from your muscles to your skin, where the heat can be dissipated.
- **Be Aware!** Heat can also cause safety problems - You are more accident-prone while working in the heat! Heat stress can affect your coordination, your concentration, reduce your strength and alertness, and make you irritable! **Avoid heat stress!**