

# 8028 - Protect Yourself from Heat Stress



## Factors Leading to Heat Stress

- High air temperature and humidity; direct sun or heat;
- Limited air movement;
- Physical exertion;
- Tight clothing or multiple layers;
- Some medications;
- Age, poor physical condition.

## Preventing Heat Stress

- Know signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses; monitor yourself and coworkers and advise your supervisor or first aid worker if you or a co-worker experience any symptoms.
- Drink extra water; about 1 cup every 20 minutes.
- Use fans in work areas.
- Take breaks in the air conditioned cafeteria.
- Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothes.
- Find out from your healthcare provider if your medications and heat don't mix; discuss with your supervisor.
- Avoid eating large meals before working in hot environments and avoid alcohol or beverages with caffeine which dehydrates your body.

There are various stages of heat stress that if ignored, could be life threatening. That is why is important to recognize the symptoms of heat stress and know how to prevent it from getting more serious.

	<b>Cause</b>	<b>Symptoms</b>	<b>Treatment</b>	<b>Prevention</b>
<b>Heat Rash</b>	Hot humid environment; plugged sweat glands.	Red, bumpy rash with severe itching.	Change into dry clothes and avoid hot environments. Rinse skin with cool water.	Wash regularly to keep skin clean and dry.
<b>Heat Cramps</b>	Inadequate fluid intake. Heavy sweating drains a person's body of salt, which can't be replaced just by drinking water.	Painful cramps in arms, legs or stomach, which occur suddenly at work or later at home.  Heat cramps are serious because they can be a warning of other more dangerous heat-induced illnesses.	Move to a cool area; loosen clothing and drink cool, salted water (1 tsp salt per gallon of water) or electrolyte-replacement beverage. Slowly stretch and gently massage affected muscles. If the cramps are severe or don't go away, seek medical aid.	Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms that often precede heat stroke.



<b>Fainting</b>	Fluid loss and inadequate water intake. Fainting may also be due to other illnesses.	Brief loss of consciousness; cool, moist skin; weak pulse.	GET MEDICAL ATTENTION. Assess need for CPR. Move to a cool area; loosen clothing; make person lie down; if the person is conscious, offer sips of cool water.	Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms that often precede heat stroke.
<b>Heat Exhaustion</b>	Fluid loss and inadequate salt and water intake causes a body's cooling system to start to break down.	Heavy sweating; cool, moist skin; ashen appearance; body temp over 38 degrees; weak pulse; low blood pressure; feeling faint; fatigue; weakness; nausea and vomiting; thirstiness, panting or breathing very rapidly; vision may be blurred.	GET MEDICAL AID. This condition can lead to heat stroke, which can kill. Move the person to a cool area; lay the person down and elevate feet slightly; loosen or remove excess clothing; provide cool water or electrolyte drink; fan and spray with cool water. If fever, fainting, confusion or seizures occur, call 911.	Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms that often precede heat stroke.
<b>Heat Stroke</b>	If a person's body has used up all its water and salt reserves, it will stop sweating. This can cause the body temperature to rise. Heat stroke may develop suddenly or may follow from heat exhaustion.	High body temp (over 41 degrees) and any one of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Weakness,</li> <li>• Confusion</li> <li>• Upset or acting strangely</li> <li>• Hot, dry, red skin</li> <li>• Fast pulse</li> <li>• Headache</li> <li>• Dizziness</li> </ul> In later stages, the person may pass out and have convulsions.	CALL 911. This condition can kill a person quickly. Move the person to a cool area; loosen or remove excess clothing; fan and spray the person with cool water; offer sips of cool water if the person is conscious.	Reduce activity levels and/or heat exposure. Drink fluids regularly. Workers should check on each other to help spot the symptoms that often precede heat stroke.

\*If medical attention is required, someone must accompany the affected worker. At no time should an affected worker be left alone.