

The summer season can present unique hazards for those working outdoors in the hot weather. The combination of heat, humidity and physical labor can lead to a variety of heat-related illnesses. Proper protection, and simple precautions can often prevent these types of illnesses and save lives.

Working in Hot Weather

Date Discussed:

Signature:

What are some of the hazards caused by working in hot weather?

It is important that all workers and employers are aware of the signs and symptoms of these illnesses and know when it is time for an employee to seek medical aid. Employers should provide training to workers so they understand what heat stress is, how it affects their health and safety, and how it can be prevented.

- **Heat Edema** – Swelling which generally occurs among people who are not acclimatized to working in hot conditions. Swelling is often most noticeable in the ankles. Recovery occurs after a day or two in a cool environment.
- **Heat Rash** – Tiny red spots on the skin which cause a prickling sensation during heat exposure. The spots are the result of inflammation caused when the ducts of sweat glands become plugged.
- **Heat Cramps** – Painful, involuntary muscle spasms that usually occur during heavy exercise in hot environments. These spasms are caused by the failure of the body to replace its lost body salts and usually occur after heavy sweating.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – Heavy sweating and a rapid pulse is a result of your body overheating. Symptoms of heat exhaustion include heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, visual disturbances, intense thirst, nausea, headache, vomiting, palpitations, tingling and numbness of the hands and feet. Heat Exhaustion should be taken seriously.

If a worker exhibits or reports early signs and symptoms of heat stress:

- Remove the worker from the hot environment to rest in a cool place and to drink lots of water.
- If a worker has fainted, have the worker rest with his or her legs and feet elevated.
- Have the worker assessed by a certified first-aid employee or a physician (if necessary).
- Keep the worker under observation until he or she is fully recovered.

Keys to preventing heat stress include:

- Drink plenty of water and avoid caffeine.
- Wear clothing made out of a breathable fabric.
- Take frequent breaks in a shaded area.
- Do the hardest physical work during the coolest part of the day.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers.

DRINK
WATER!



Discussions: Have the crew describe some tasks where heat stress could occur?
What measures could be taken to prevent heat stress in these situations?