

About & Conditions

What is heat stress?

The official name for heat stress is hyperthermia (the opposite of hypothermia). Hyperthermia is elevated temperature due to thermoregulation failure, this occurs when the body absorbs more heat than it dissipates.

There are a few different ailments that are associated to heat stress, these include:

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the most serious of the heat induced ailments, occurring when the body can no longer control its temperature, causing death or permanent disability.

Symptoms include:

- High body temperature
- Confusion
- Loss of Coordination
- Seizures, Coma
- Hot, dry skin

First aid:

- Request immediate medical assistance
- Move worker to a cool shaded area
- Remove excess clothing and apply cool water to victim's body

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Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is how the body responds to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through profuse sweating.

Symptoms include:

- Rapid heart beat
- Heavy sweating
- Extreme weakness or fatigue
- Dizziness
- Nausea, vomiting
- Fast, shallow breathing
- Slightly elevated body temperature

First aid:

- Rest in a cool area
- Drink plenty of water or other cool electrolyte beverages
- Take a cool shower

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps also occur from loss of salt and water.

Symptoms include:

- Muscle cramps, pain, or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs

First aid:

- Sit in a cool place
- Drink clear juice or sports beverage
- Do not return to work for a few hours

Heat Safety

When possible avoid heavy exertion, extreme heat, sun exposure, and high humidity. When these environmental conditions can't be avoided take special care.

- Monitor your physical condition and that of your coworkers for signs of heat illness
- Wear only light colored, loose fitting, breathable clothing such as cotton
- Gradually build up to heavy work
- Take more breaks when performing heavy work
- Take breaks in cool shaded areas
- Drink water frequently, avoid the feeling of thirst

