



First Aid: Heat Illness in Construction

5-Minute Talk

Overview

When the body is unable to cool itself through perspiration, serious heat illnesses can occur. The most extreme heat-induced illnesses are heat exhaustion and heat stroke. If not treated, heat-related illnesses can lead to mental confusion, seizures, or even death.

Symptoms of heat exhaustion include:

- Headaches, dizziness, and/or lightheadedness
- Physical weakness, fainting, or passing out
- Mood changes, irritability, or mental confusion
- Sick to the stomach, vomiting, throwing up
- Decreased and darkly color urine
- Pale, clammy skin

Symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Dry, pale skin, with no perspiration
- Hot, red skin, resembling sun burn
- Mood changes, irritability, and mental confusion
- Seizures
- Physical weakness, fainting, or passing out

Treating heat related illnesses:

- Move person to a cool, shaded area. Don't leave the person unattended.
- If person is dizzy or light-headed, lay them on their back and raise their feet a few inches.



- If the person is sick to their stomach, lay them on their right side.
- Loosen and remove heavy clothing.
- Offer cool water—a small cup every 15 minutes.
- Fan them, spray with cool water, or lay cool, wet towels on their head, wrists, or other exposed skin.
- If the person does not feel better in a short time, call for emergency medical help.
- If ice is available, place ice packs under the arm pits and in the groin area.

Employee Training

There are no specific training requirements for heat-related illnesses.

Training Tips

Using the employee handout, review with employees the symptoms of heat-related illnesses. Review with employees ways to protect themselves and coworkers.

Explain that employees should check with their doctor if they are taking medications or have any medical condition, to see if working in hot environments would have adverse effects. Mention that having had a heat-induced illness in the past increases the odds that an individual is at increased risk.

Also explain that employees who must wear heavy or restrictive PPE puts that employee at increased risk.

Where To Go For More Information

29 CFR 1910.151—Medical services and first aid