

# HEAT RELATED ILLNESS

When the body is unable to cool itself by sweating, several heat-induced illnesses such as heat stress or heat exhaustion and the more severe heat stroke can occur, and can result in death.

Factors such as high temperature, direct sun or heat, humidity, clothing worn while working, age, weight, personal fitness, medical conditions (diabetes, heart condition, etc.), medications (water pills, blood pressure, heart condition, allergies, etc. check with your doctor), caffeine, and alcohol may lead to heat illness. Clothing, PPE's, and humidity can restrict sweat evaporation and not allow the body to cool. The body continues to produce heat but can't release the heat so the deep body temperature rises. Eventually the body's control mechanism starts to fail. When this occurs symptoms of heat illness start to appear.

## SYMPTOMS OF HEAT EXHAUSTION

- Headaches, dizziness, lightheadedness or fainting
- Weakness and moist skin
- Mood changes such as irritability or confusion
- Upset stomach or vomiting



## SYMPTOMS OF HEAT STROKE

- Dry hot skin with no sweating
- Mental confusion or losing consciousness
- Seizures or fits



## PREVENTING HEAT STRESS

- Know signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses; monitor yourself and coworkers
- Block out direct sun or other heat sources
- Use cooling fans/air-conditioning; rest regularly
- Drink lots of water; about 1 cup every 15 minutes
- Wear lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, or heavy meals



## What to Do for Heat-Related Illness

Watch out for yourself and coworkers. If you or a coworker experience symptoms, notify your supervisor. Cool the person by moving to a shaded area, fanning, spraying with cool water, remove restrictive clothing, provide cool drinking water, etc. COOL THE PERSON! If someone is suffering a heat stroke, this is a medical emergency, call 911 immediately. It is important to get treatment before harmful damage is done to the body.

To prevent heat illness, keep hydrated throughout the day, eat properly, allow time to acclimate to high heat temperatures, wear breathable clothing (if possible), remove PPE while taking breaks in cool shaded areas, avoid caffeine and alcohol, work during cooler parts of the day, and watch out for yourself and coworkers.

