



June 21, 2018

HYDRATION - The Best Defense for Preventing Heat Related Illnesses

At times, workers may be exposed to extreme heat and humidity for extended periods. When the human body's temperature-regulating system, comprised of the hypothalamus, skin, sweat glands, and blood vessels, is no longer able to maintain a normal temperature, heat-related illnesses can occur and, if left untreated, may result in death.

To avoid becoming ill while working in hot environments, remember **H-Y-D-R-A-T-I-O-N!** It's your best defense for preventing a heat-related illnesses.

H₂O... H₂O... H₂O, AND Electrolytes -

- ⇒ If in heat < 2 hours and involved in moderate work activities, drink 1 cup of water (8 oz) every 15 minutes, even if you don't feel thirsty.
- ⇒ During prolonged sweating lasting several hours, drink sports drinks containing balanced electrolytes.
- ⇒ Avoid alcohol and drinks with high caffeine or sugar.
- ⇒ Generally, fluid intake should not exceed 6 cups per hour.



Yearly refresher training -

- ⇒ Required for employees who work outdoors in hot environments.
- ⇒ **SafeSchools** has a 15-minute course on "Heat Illness."

Dress accordingly

- ⇒ Lightweight, light colored, loose fitting clothing; a wide-brimmed hat; and sunscreen.

Rotate job tasks &/or workers -

- ⇒ Schedule physically demanding jobs during cooler times of the day;
- ⇒ Alternate between tasks that can be performed in cooler or shaded environments;
- ⇒ Rotate workers to reduce the time any individual works outside in hot weather.

Acclimate -

- ⇒ Gradually increase time working outdoors over 5 to 7 days to build-up tolerance to the heat, especially if you are not used to working outdoors and/or if you have been away from work for a while, i.e., on vacation.

Take regular rest breaks in shaded areas

Implement added precautions/cooling measures on excessively hot days and when wearing heavy or non-breathable clothing or impermeable protective clothing

- ⇒ Wear water-dampened clothing; or
- ⇒ Use cooling vests, cool mist stations, etc.

Observe/monitor others working/playing nearby for signs/symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

- ⇒ If you or a co-worker start to develop symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, weakness, or unusual fatigue, let your supervisor know and seek rest in a cool, shaded area.

Notify Emergency Medical Services (9-1-1) immediately

- ⇒ If you suspect heat stroke or if a worker (or student) loses consciousness, appears confused, or uncoordinated, call 9-1-1 immediately!

"Heat stroke is no joke. Stay hydrated." ~ "Crash" Harrison



SAFETY MATTERS