

May 2021 SAFETY TOOLBOX

MONTHLY SAFETY TOOLBOX

Heat Stress

Introductory Comments

Heat Stress can cause incidents due to loss of focus or excessive fatigue (www.OSHA.gov). The direct consequences of Heat Stress can include: Heat Cramps, Heat Exhaustion, or Heat Stroke (www.OSHA.gov).

Instructions:

Use this Safety Toolbox Talk to spark discussion within the employee group. Test knowledge retention with the associated quiz.

Meeting Starter Questions

- In your department, are there workers who work outside?
- Are you aware of how to prevent Heat Stress?
- What should you do if an employee falls ill due to Heat Stress?
- How can you reduce your risk for heat related illness during the COVID-19 Pandemic?

Critical Safety Points

Heat Stroke

Seek medical help immediately. Signs and symptoms include flushed skin that is very hot to the touch; rapid breathing; headache, dizziness, confusion or irrational behavior; and convulsions or unresponsiveness. The victim also will likely have stopped sweating. Please take action by:

- Call 911 immediately
- Move the victim to a cool place
- Remove outer clothing
- Immediately cool the victim with any means at hand, preferably by immersing up to the neck in cold water (with the help of a second rescuer)
- If immersion in cold water is not possible, place the victim in a cold shower or move to a cool area and cover as much of the body as possible with cold, wet towels
- Do not try to force the victim to drink liquids
- Monitor the victim's breathing and be ready to give CPR if needed

Heat Exhaustion

This can happen when the body loses an excessive amount of salt and water. Symptoms are like those of the flu and can include severe thirst, fatigue, headache, nausea, vomiting and, sometimes, diarrhea.



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Other symptoms include profuse sweating, clammy or pale skin, dizziness, rapid pulse and normal or slightly elevated body temperature. Uncontrolled heat exhaustion can evolve into heatstroke. Make sure you treat the victim quickly.

- Move them to a shaded or air-conditioned area
- Give them water or other cool, nonalcoholic beverages
- Apply wet towels or have them take a cool shower

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps are muscle spasms that usually affect the legs or abdominal muscles, often after physical activity. Excessive sweating reduces salt levels in the body, which can result in heat cramps, please:

- Sit or lie down in the shade
- Drink cool water or a sports drink
- Stretch affected muscles
- Seek medical attention if you have heart problems or if the cramps don't get better in an hour

The best way to avoid a heat-related illness is to limit exposure outdoors during hot days. Air conditioning is the best way to cool off, according to the CDC. Also:

- Drink more liquid than you think you need and avoid alcohol
- Wear loose, lightweight clothing and a hat
- Replace salt lost from sweating by drinking fruit juice or sports drinks
- Avoid spending time outdoors during the hottest part of the day, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.
- Wear sunscreen; sunburn affects the body's ability to cool itself
- Pace yourself when you run or otherwise exert your body

Heat-Related Illnesses:

Heat Stroke- Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related illness. Suffering from a Heat Stroke can result in death or cause damage to the brain and other internal organs.

Heat Cramps- Heat Cramps are painful short lived muscle cramps.

Heat Exhaustion- There are two types of Heat Exhaustion



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Mask/ Face Coverings Recommendation while Working during Summer Months:

- When wearing a mask in hot weather, you should take all of the usual precautions that you would normally take for preventing heat-related illness.
- Use cloth face coverings that optimize fit and comfort, are made out of breathable, moisture-wicking materials, and use light colors when working in direct sunlight.
- Change cloth face coverings when wet, as wet face coverings make it more difficult to breathe and are not as effective.
- Carry a spare cloth face covering or mask. If your cloth face covering or mask gets wet, visibly soiled, or contaminated at work, take it off and store it to be laundered.
- Maintain social distancing (at least 6 feet) during rest breaks. Proper social distancing is very important during breaks as workers will need to remove cloth face coverings, masks, or respirators that cover the mouth in order to rehydrate. (www.cdc.gov) (www.osha.gov)





MONTHLY SAFETY AWARENESS EMPLOYEE QUIZ

Employee Name:	Signature:
Division:	Date:
Instructor:	Score:

Heat Stress

Question 1: Remove your mask if it gets moist from sweat and replace it with a clean mask.

- TRUE FALSE

Question 2: Heat cramps are muscle spasms that usually affect the legs or abdominal muscles, after physical activity.

- TRUE FALSE

Question 3: When the body loses an excessive amount of salt and water, heat exhaustion cannot set in.

- TRUE FALSE

Question 4: When wearing a mask in hot weather, you should take all the usual precautions that you would normally take for preventing heat-related illness.

- TRUE FALSE

Quiz Answer Key:

1. TRUE
2. TRUE
3. FALSE
4. TRUE

