



MAY - SAFETY TOOLBOX

Workplace Safety & Compliance

Training Topic- Heat Stress

Instructions:

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

Introductory Comments

Millions of U.S. workers are exposed to heat in their workplaces. Although illness from exposure to heat is preventable, every year, thousands become sick from occupational heat exposure, and some cases are fatal. Heat Stress can result in heat stroke, heat exhaustion, heat cramps, or heat rashes. (www.OSHA.gov)

Meeting Starter Questions

- How do we prevent Heat Stress?
- What steps are taken if an employee has symptoms of Heat Stress?
- How can you reduce your risk of heat related illness?

Critical Safety Points

Heat- Related Illnesses:

Heat Stroke- Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related illness and occurs when the body's temperature regulation fails, and body temperature rises to critical levels. Suffering from a Heat Stroke can result in death or cause damage to the brain and other internal organs. Primary signs and symptoms of heat stroke are confusion; irrational behavior; loss of consciousness; convulsions; a lack of sweating (usually); hot, dry skin; and an abnormally high body temperature.

Heat Cramps- Heat Cramps are painful short lived muscle cramps. Heat cramps are usually caused by performing hard physical labor in a hot environment. These cramps have been attributed to an electrolyte imbalance caused by sweating.

Heat Exhaustion- There are two types of Heat Exhaustion:

Water depletion - Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, and loss of consciousness.

Salt depletion - Signs include nausea and vomiting, muscle cramps, and dizziness. Fortunately, this condition responds readily to prompt treatment.

Employees suffering from heat exhaustion should be removed from the hot environment and given fluid replacement. They should also be encouraged to get adequate rest and when possible, ice packs should be applied.

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

Employees who are new to working in warm environments are at increased risk of heat-related illness. Especially during a worker's first few days, absolutely all symptoms should be taken seriously. Workers who develop symptoms should receive an evaluation for possible heat-related illness.

Personal Risk Factors- Some workers handle heat stress less effectively than others. Heat tolerance happens for a variety of reasons. Personal Risk Factors can include:

- Obesity
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Lower level of physical activity
- Alcohol use

Employers should recognize that not all workers tolerate heat the same way. Workplace controls should focus on making jobs safe for all employees. An occupational medical monitoring program can identify workers who are at increased risk of heat illness, while maintaining the confidentiality of worker's health information.

When heat hazards are present, workers should receive training about personal factors that can make them more susceptible to heat related illness. When in doubt, workers should talk to their healthcare provider about whether they can work safely in the heat.



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

Heat Stress

Question 1: Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related illness and occurs when the body's temperature regulation fails, and body temperature rises to critical levels.

TRUE FALSE

Question 2: There are two types of Heat Exhaustion- Water Depletion and Salt Depletion.

TRUE FALSE

Question 3: Employees suffering from heat exhaustion should be removed from the hot environment and given fluid replacement.

TRUE FALSE

Question 4: When heat hazards are present, workers should receive training about personal factors that can make them more susceptible to heat related illness.

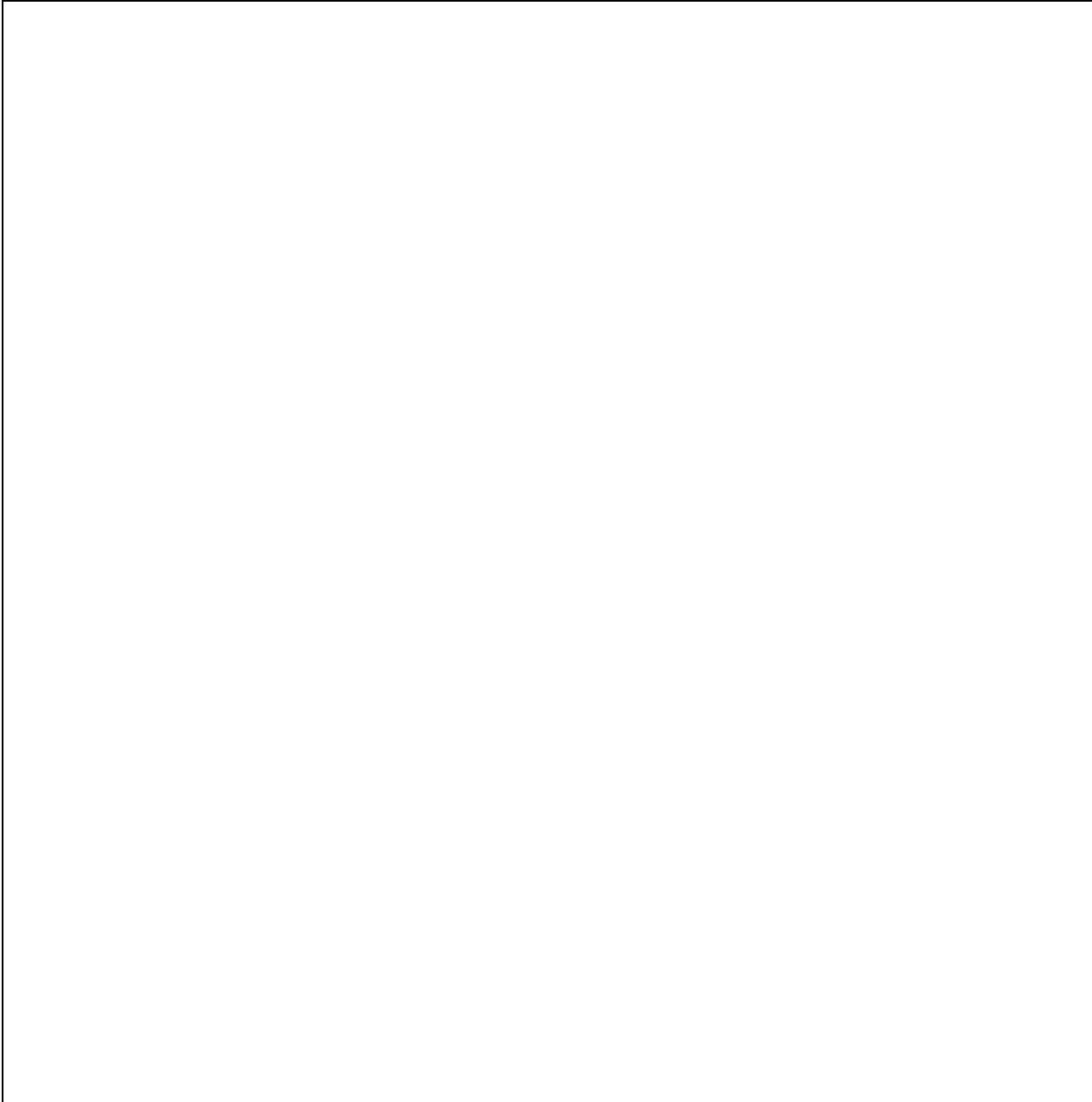
TRUE FALSE

Quiz Answer Key:

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



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