



# EHS Fact Sheet

## Heat Stress

### Introduction

At times, the body becomes too hot to cool itself off by sweating; when this happens, your body is susceptible to heat related illnesses. These illnesses include but are not limited to: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat rash and heat stroke in severe cases.

Often heat-induced illnesses are related to the summer months, however, anytime a worker's core temperature is raised, there is a risk of heat stress. These warm work environments can also exist indoors, so being aware of symptoms and contributing factors of heat-induced illnesses can help you prevent these illnesses.

### Protect yourself from heat stress

- Periodically check yourself and your coworkers for signs of heat stress.
- Wear cool, breathable clothing.
- Acclimate yourself to the work (gradually build up to hard work).
- Try to perform the most physically demanding tasks during cooler parts of the day.
- Take more breaks during high temperatures and humidity.
- Drink water like its going out of style!

### OSHA Avoid Heat Stress Phone App

[https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat\\_inde/heat\\_app.html](https://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_inde/heat_app.html)

### Types of heat-induced illnesses

**Heat Rash** is caused by sweating and results in pimple-like clusters.

**Symptoms:** itchy, red and bumpy rash

**Treatment:** keep dry and in a cooler less humid environment.

**Heat Cramps** are muscle pains usually caused by lack of fluid and loss of body salts (electrolytes) during sweating.

**Symptoms:** muscle spasms or cramps that normally occur during rest

**Treatment:** rest in cool environment and replace fluid loss by drinking water or sports drinks.

**Heat Exhaustion** is the second most serious heat related illness.

**Symptoms:** headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, irritability, confusion, thirst, heavy sweating, and elevated body temperature.

**Treatment:** remove from the hot area, give cool liquids and use cool water or compresses to lower the core temperature. Workers with heat exhaustion symptoms should be taken for a medical evaluation and treatment.

**Heat Stroke** is the most serious heat-related illness. Heat stroke occurs when the body is unable to regulate it's core temperature and could result in death.

**Symptoms:** confusion, loss of consciousness, seizures and the worker may stop sweating.

**Treatment:** call for medical help immediately. While waiting for medical help, try to cool the worker with cold water, air circulation and even ice.