



HEAT STRESS

OPERATIONS INVOLVING HIGH AIR TEMPERATURES, RADIANT HEAT SOURCES, HIGH HUMIDITY, DIRECT PHYSICAL CONTACT WITH HOT OBJECTS, OR STRENUOUS PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES HAVE A HIGH POTENTIAL FOR INDUCING HEAT STRESS.

HEAT IS A SERIOUS HAZARD IN CONSTRUCTION. YOUR BODY BUILDS UP HEAT WHEN YOU WORK AND SWEATS TO GET RID OF EXTRA HEAT. BUT SOMETIMES YOUR BODY MAY NOT COOL OFF FAST ENOUGH. THIS CAN HAPPEN, SAY, IF YOU ARE UP ON A ROOF POURING HOT ASPHALT OR YOU ARE LIFTING HEAVY LOADS.

TOO MUCH HEAT CAN MAKE YOU TIRED, HURT YOUR JOB PERFORMANCE, AND INCREASE YOUR CHANCE OF INJURY. YOU CAN GET SKIN RASH. YOU CAN ALSO GET:

- **DEHYDRATION.** WHEN YOUR BODY LOSES WATER, YOU CAN'T COOL OFF FAST ENOUGH. YOU FEEL THIRSTY AND WEAK.
- **CRAMPS.** YOU CAN GET MUSCLE CRAMPS FROM THE HEAT EVEN AFTER YOU LEAVE WORK.
- **HEAT EXHAUSTION.** YOU FEEL TIRED, NAUSEOUS, HEADACHY, AND GIDDY (DIZZY AND SILLY). YOUR SKIN IS DAMP AND LOOKS MUDDY OR FLUSHED. YOU MAY FAINT.
- **HEAT STROKE.** YOU MAY HAVE HOT DRY SKIN AND A HIGH TEMPERATURE. OR YOU MAY FEEL CONFUSED. YOU MAY HAVE CONVULSIONS OR BECOME UNCONSCIOUS. **HEAT STROKE CAN KILL YOU** UNLESS YOU GET EMERGENCY MEDICAL HELP.

THE RISK OF HEAT STRESS

YOUR RISK OF HEAT STRESS DEPENDS ON MANY THINGS. THESE INCLUDE:

- YOUR PHYSICAL CONDITION
- THE WEATHER (TEMPERATURE, HUMIDITY)
- HOW MUCH CLOTHING YOU HAVE ON
- HOW FAST YOU MUST MOVE OR HOW MUCH WEIGHT YOU MUST LIFT
- IF YOU ARE NEAR A FAN OR THERE IS A BREEZE
- IF YOU ARE IN THE SUN.

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

- CALL 911 (OR LOCAL EMERGENCY NUMBER) AT ONCE.

WHILE WAITING FOR HELP TO ARRIVE:

- MOVE THE WORKER TO A COOL, SHADED AREA.
- LOOSEN OR REMOVE HEAVY CLOTHING.
- PROVIDE COOL DRINKING WATER.
- FAN AND MIST THE PERSON WITH WATER.