

Topic: Heat Exhaustion & Heat Stroke

Summer is finally here. We all look forward to the long warm summer days. Whether you are working indoors or outdoors the heat brings with it increased risk of heat related illness. It is important that you know the difference between Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke and what to do for both.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat Exhaustion is the milder of the two but if left untreated could become Heat Stroke.

Symptoms

Shallow Breathing

Weakness & Fatigue

Muscle Cramps

Dizziness and or Fainting

Nausea/Vomiting

Cool, Pale, Clammy Skin

Heavy Sweating

Treatment

Move the person to a cooler environment

Remove or loosen excess or tight fitting clothing

Cool the person by fanning or sponging with cool water

Give them cool water to drink

The symptoms should improve within 30 minutes but the person should still seek medical aid.

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is a serious condition that if left untreated can be fatal. Heat stroke requires immediate emergency medical attention.

Symptoms

Hot, dry flushed skin

Absence of sweating

Confusion, disorientation

Irrational behaviour

Convulsions

Decreased level of consciousness

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Treatment

Call 911

While waiting for help to arrive move the person to the coolest place available

Maintain airway breathing and circulation as required and monitor until help arrives

Apply cold water to him or her by spraying or sponging

How to Avoid Heat Related Illness

Schedule work to minimize heat exposure

Do the hardest physical work during the coolest parts of the day

Take more breaks in cool areas during the hottest part of the day

Wear light coloured loose fitting clothing made of a breathable fabric such as cotton

Drink plenty of water throughout the day

Avoid drinks with alcohol caffeine or large amounts of sugar