

Preventing Heat Illness

Heat stress, from exertion or hot environments, places people at risk for illnesses such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps. These heat related illnesses can result in permanent disability and even death.

Ways to Reduce the Hazard of Heat Stress at Work

Avoid extreme heat, prolonged sun exposure, and high humidity whenever possible. When these conditions can't be avoided, take the following preventative steps:

- Drink plenty of water, at least eight (8) ounces every 20 to 30 minutes.
- Monitor your physical condition for signs and symptoms of heat illness provided below.
- Acclimatize yourself to the heat, gradually building up to heavier work loads over a two week period.
- Schedule heavy work during earlier in the day; take breaks in the shade.
- Wear light-colored, loose-fitting clothing, in breathable fabrics; wear a hat, sun screen and sun glasses.

Symptoms of Heat Illness

- Heat Stroke – A condition that occurs when the body becomes unable to control its temperature.
 - High body temperature
 - Confusion
 - Loss of Coordination
 - Hot, dry skin with profuse sweating
 - Throbbing headache
 - Seizures, coma

First Aid: Call 911; move person to a cool shaded area; remove excess clothing and apply cool water to their body.

- Heat Exhaustion – The body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt from sweating.
 - Rapid heart beat
 - Heavy sweating
 - Extreme weakness or fatigue
 - Dizziness
 - Nausea, vomiting
 - Fast, shallow breathing

First Aid: Rest in cool area; drink plenty of water; take a cool shower or bath if possible.

- Heat Cramps – Affect people who sweat a lot. Sweating depletes salt and moisture levels.
 - Muscle cramps
 - Pain or spasms in the abdomen, arms or legs.

First Aid: Stop all activity and sit in a cool place; drink a sports beverage or drink water with food; avoid salt tablets; do not return to work for a few hours until cramps subside; seek medical attention if you have heart problems, are on a low-sodium diet or if the cramps do not subside within one (1) hour.



Keenan's Loss Control services promote safety awareness, and assist in the identification of conditions which may pose a risk of injury. We do not suggest that following our recommendations will eliminate all risk of injury or will result in improved loss experience.