



Understanding Good Stress vs. Bad Stress

Stress is often perceived as a negative force that impacts our overall well-being, and, in some cases, workplace safety. However, not all stress is detrimental. Stress is common; it's your body's way of responding to threats, demands and difficult situations.

Good stress is healthy and can serve as a powerful motivator to tackle challenges. Bad stress, on the other hand, often comes with harmful physical symptoms that limit your ability to focus and navigate your daily routine. When left unmanaged, bad stress can lead to lasting health concerns and make you more susceptible to workplace accidents and injuries. With this in mind, understanding the difference between good and bad stress is crucial to maintaining a balanced, productive life.

What Is Good Stress?

Good stress, also known as eustress, is the type of stress that can be beneficial and invigorating. It is the kind of stress that pushes you to perform better, encourages growth and helps you achieve your goals. Eustress can arise from various positive experiences, such as starting a new job, preparing for a competition or taking on an exciting project.

What Is Bad Stress?

Bad stress, often referred to as distress, is the type of stress that can negatively affect your health and well-being. This is normally the type of stress that people refer to when they mention they are stressed. Distress often results from overwhelming or prolonged stressors, such as financial difficulties, relationship problems or a heavy workload. Unlike eustress, distress can lead to feelings of anxiety, frustration and helplessness.

Differentiating Between Eustress and Distress

Here are some simple ways to differentiate between distress and eustress:

- **Emotional response**—Eustress typically feels exciting and motivating, whereas distress feels overwhelming and anxiety-inducing.
- **Physical symptoms**—Eustress may lead to positive physical responses, namely, increased energy. Distress can cause symptoms such as headaches, upset stomach, fatigue and muscle tension.
- **Impact on performance**—Eustress enhances performance and productivity, while distress can hinder your ability to function effectively and focus on the task at hand.

Embracing Eustress

Finding the sweet spot of stress involves embracing eustress while managing distress. Consider these tips to help you harness the power of good stress, thereby remaining productive, safe and injury-free on the job:

- **Set achievable goals.** Break down large tasks into smaller, manageable steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed.
- **Maintain a positive mindset.** Focus on the potential benefits and growth opportunities that come with challenges.
- **Stay organized.** Keep a structured schedule to manage your time effectively and reduce unnecessary stress.

Consult your employer for more information on managing stress at work.

Handling the Summer Heat

Summer brings longer days and plenty of sunshine, but it also comes with the challenge of staying cool amid soaring temperatures. Sweltering heat can lead to various heat-related illnesses, some of which can be serious if not addressed promptly.

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, exposure to environmental heat causes nearly 50 workplace fatalities each year.

Considering these findings, it's crucial to protect yourself while working in the summer heat. Here's an overview of common heat-related illnesses and prevention guidelines.

Heat Syncope

Heat syncope is when someone suddenly faints in a hot environment, especially after standing for a long time or getting up quickly from a sitting or lying-down position. Heat syncope occurs as the body tries to cool itself down by widening blood vessels, which, in turn, can cause blood pressure to drop. This can make it hard for enough blood to reach the brain, leading to fainting. In most cases, lying down and elevating the legs can help individuals recover quickly.

Older adults, people with heart conditions and those taking medications that affect blood pressure or who are not used to the heat have a higher risk of heat syncope. To prevent heat syncope, drink plenty of water, wear light, loose-fitting clothes, and take regular breaks in cool or shaded areas. Additionally, avoid getting up too quickly from a sitting or lying position to keep your blood pressure steady.

Heat Rash

Heat rash occurs when sweat ducts become blocked, trapping sweat beneath the skin. Common in humid environments, it often affects areas where skin folds or clothing rubs. Symptoms of heat rash include small, red bumps on the skin, itching and mild swelling.

Excessive sweating, tight clothing and prolonged periods of physical activity can increase your risk of developing heat rash. You can avoid it by wearing loose-fitting, breathable fabrics, such as cotton or linen. Also, refrain from using thick lotions or creams that may clog your

pores and use fragrance-free soaps that won't dry or irritate your skin.

Heat Cramps

Excessive sweating from heat or physical activity can cause an electrolyte imbalance, leading to muscle cramps or spasms. Although heat cramps aren't typically serious, they are a sign that the body is struggling to cope with the heat and that further measures should be taken to prevent more severe heat-related illnesses. You might have heat cramps if you're experiencing tight muscles, stiff or curled toes, and flushed or moist skin.

Heat cramps are common for those who work outdoors. If you start feeling heat cramp symptoms, immediately stop any activity and get out of the heat, if possible. Stretch and massage the cramping muscle and apply a cold compress. Consume sports drinks or an oral rehydration solution to replenish lost electrolytes.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is a serious condition that occurs when the body loses an excessive amount of water and salt through sweating. Symptoms can appear suddenly or gradually. They include pale skin, dizziness, nausea, headache, muscle spasms and a high body temperature.

You are more likely to experience heat exhaustion when engaging in strenuous physical activity in hot, humid environments. People who are not acclimated to high temperatures are also at higher risk. If someone is experiencing heat exhaustion, move them to a cool place and remove unnecessary clothing. Offer them cool water to replenish fluids, then use a spray bottle or apply a damp cloth to their skin. Fanning them and placing cold packs on their neck can also help.

Heatstroke

Heat exhaustion, if not treated, can lead to life-threatening heatstroke. This happens when the body's temperature regulation system fails, ultimately leading to a dangerously high fever. It may also cause confusion, rapid pulse or loss of consciousness. Heatstroke requires immediate medical attention to prevent permanent damage or death. If you see someone who may be suffering from heatstroke, call 911.

Reach out to your employer for more guidance on preventing heat-related illnesses on the job.

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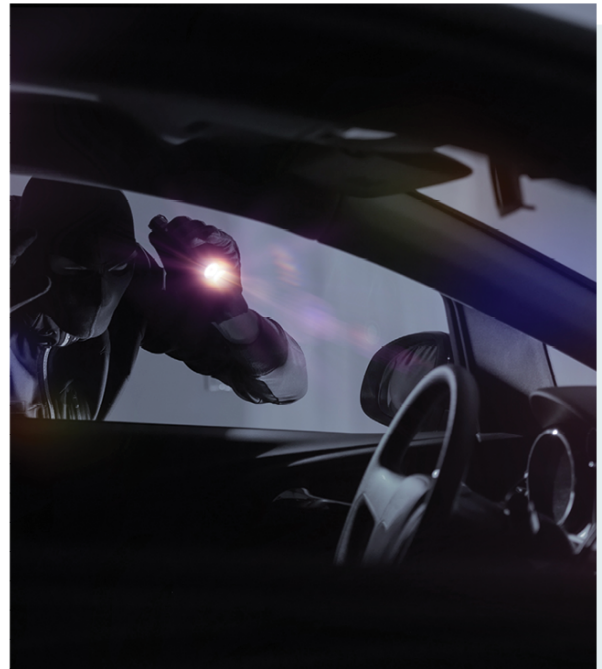
How to Prevent Vehicle Theft

July is Vehicle Theft Prevention Month. Although thefts have decreased in recent years, these crimes remain a real threat. Over 650,000 U.S. vehicles were stolen in 2025.

Consider the following precautions to protect your vehicle:

- Always lock your vehicle and never leave the key inside, even for only a few minutes.
- Make sure all windows are fully closed whenever your car is unattended.
- Park in well-lit areas.
- Consider using anti-theft devices, such as steering-wheel locks.
- Avoid leaving valuables in your car.

If your vehicle is stolen, the right auto insurance can be key. Contact us today to learn more.



Understanding and Recognizing Heat-related Illnesses

As you enjoy outdoor activities and warm weather this summer, you also need to be wary of heat-related illnesses. Even short periods spent in high temperatures can have dangerous consequences for your health.

By understanding different types of these illnesses and recognizing their symptoms, you can help keep yourself and those around you safe this summer.

- **Heat rash** may appear as red clusters of pimples or small blisters, often on the neck and upper chest and in elbow creases.
- **Heat cramps** may involve muscle cramps and pain or spasms, typically in the abdomen, arms or legs.
- **Heat syncope** involves abbreviated fainting spells, dizziness and light-headedness.
- **Rhabdomyolysis** (Rhabdo) symptoms include cramps or muscle pain, feelings of weakness and abnormally dark urine.
- **Heat exhaustion** can be detected through noticing headaches, nausea, dizziness, irritability, heavy sweating and elevated body temperature.
- **Heatstroke** may be apparent through confusion, slurred speech or altered mental status, as well as loss of consciousness, seizures and hot or dry skin.

When they go unnoticed, heat-related illnesses can have serious ramifications and may even be fatal.

If you have questions about heat-related illnesses, contact a medical professional.

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Keeping Your Family Safe on Open Water This Summer

Swimming and summer often go hand in hand. But whether you're taking a family vacation or a day trip to your local beach, ensuring safety must be a top priority.

Lakes, rivers, oceans and other bodies of open water can harbor different dangers and greater risks than a backyard or community pool. Whether you'll be taking a dip yourself or supervising your children, planning and precautions are paramount.

5 Open Water Safety Tips

This summer, enjoy the open water safely by committing to the following:

1. **Tread lightly**—Unlike swimming pools, open water won't typically have even edges and level surfaces. Avoid waters where you're uncertain of depth, obstacles or currents.
2. **Stick to approved areas**—Many public beaches and swimming areas will have buoys and other markers. Remain in these areas to avoid boaters or dangerous wildlife.
3. **Check for lifeguards**—When choosing a destination or upon arrival, check whether a lifeguard is on duty or not. If the answer is no, consider going elsewhere.
4. **Supervise**—Regardless of whether lifeguards or other safety personnel are on-site, make sure you're keeping an eye on your children. Avoid distractions, such as books and smartphones. If possible, assign shifts to multiple adults.

5. **Use safety equipment**—Even if you and your family are strong swimmers, the open water is dangerous. U.S. Coast Guard-approved life jackets and other floatation devices are strongly recommended.

For more summer- and outdoor-related safety resources, contact us today.

How to Cool Your Home Without Air Conditioning

Air conditioning has become a common luxury in many homes, but there may be times when you have to go without it.

Knowing how to cool down your home through other means can be important. Consider these strategies:

- Adjust what you do with your windows. Use curtains and blinds to block sunlight during the day and open windows during the cooler hours at night.
- Create ventilation through your home, such as by opening windows on opposite sides for a cross breeze. Fans can also be used to exhaust warm air outside and circulate cool air through rooms.
- Reduce use of heat sources, including laundry machines and other large appliances. Consider preparing meals that don't require cooking or grilling outdoors. Swap out incandescent light bulbs for LEDs.

Reach out today to learn more.