



HEAT & COLD STRESS POLICY

Preventing Heat-Related Illnesses (Heat Stress)

When the body heats up faster than it can cool itself, mild to severe illnesses may develop. It's important to recognize the symptoms of heat-related illnesses and understand how to prevent, control, and respond to their effects.

Air temperature, humidity and clothing can increase the risk of developing heat-related illnesses. So can age, sex, weight, physical fitness, nutrition, alcohol or drug use, or pre-existing diseases like diabetes? How can you prevent or control heat-related illnesses?

- Drink water - Drink small amounts of water frequently, about a cup every 15-20 minutes. (Alcohol increases the loss of body fluids.)
- Limit exposure time and/or temperature - Try to schedule hot jobs for cooler times of the day or cooler seasons of the year. Take rest breaks in cool areas. Add more workers to reduce workload or reduce the workday.
- Acclimatization - Gradually adapting to heat will reduce the severity of heat stress.
- Engineering controls - Mechanize heavy jobs or increase air movement with fans or coolers.
- Wearing loose, lightweight clothing - Clothing can affect heat buildup.
- Salt tablets should not be used - Taking salt tablets can raise blood pressure, cause stomach ulcers, and seriously affect workers with heart disease.

Someone with a mild reaction to heat may have a rash called "prickly heat" or painful muscle spasms, called heat cramps, during or after activity. A mild reaction may also include fatigue or dizziness. You may notice a change in physical or mental performance and an increase in accidents. A person with a moderate reaction or heat exhaustion will have some or all the following symptoms: excessive sweating, cold, moist, pale or flushed skin, thirst, extreme weakness or fatigue, headache, nausea, lack of appetite, rapid weak pulse, or giddiness and if not properly treated, the victim may collapse.



SAFETY

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Anyone with mild or moderate symptoms should be moved to a cool, shaded place with circulating air. They should lie down and, if conscious, be given small sips of cool water at frequent intervals. If symptoms continue, a doctor should be called.

In severe cases of heat illness, a heat stroke may result. The victim's face is flushed red and their skin is hot and dry with no sweating. They develop a severe headache with deep, rapid breathing. They have a very high fever and may become delirious. They may become unconscious, have convulsions, or lapse into a coma. This condition is fatal unless emergency medical treatment is obtained. Immediately call for medical help. In the meantime, get them out of the hot environment. Loosen clothing and pour water over the entire body. Get air circulating around the body?

Recognizing the warning signs and symptoms of heat-related illnesses and using preventive and control measures can reduce the frequency and severity of heat illness while increasing worker productivity.

The above evaluations and/or recommendations are for general guidance only and should not be relied upon for legal compliance purposes. They are based solely on the information provided to us and relate only to those conditions specifically discussed. We do not make any warranty, expressed or implied, that your workplace is safe or healthful or that it complies with all laws, regulations, or standards.

Preventing Cold-Related Illnesses

Working in the cold for prolonged periods of time can cause many physical problems. You should take precautions to prevent cold stress in the workplace. There are several types of cold stress that a person can suffer.

Different Types of Cold Stress

Hypothermia is the most common type of cold stress. Hypothermia occurs when your body temperature drops from prolonged exposure in a cold environment. Your body stores energy and that keeps you warm at first but as you stay in the cold your body burns that energy and cannot replace it as quickly. That is how your temperature



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drops below normal.

Some of the Symptoms of Hypothermia are a slowed heartbeat and irregular breathing. You could also become drowsy or feel extremely exhausted. Many people often suffer from memory lapse and difficulty speaking after hypothermia has set in. If you suspect a person is suffering from hypothermia, call for medical attention immediately. While waiting for help you should keep the person in a warm room.

Remove any wet clothing and wrap them in a blanket. Give them a warm drink such as hot tea. This will help raise their body temperature.

The second most common form of cold stress is Frostbite. Frostbite is caused by the body beginning to freeze and usually starts in the toes or fingers which lose heat the fastest. In severe frostbite cases the tissue is permanently damaged and must be amputated to stop the spread of dead tissue.

There are a few symptoms of frostbite the first is numbness of the area. Second is tingling or aching feelings and the third is a blueish waxy skin. If someone is showing symptoms of frost bite call for medical help as soon as possible. Try not to use the area of body that is suffering frostbite it is your hands try not to touch or pick up things. If your feet are frostbitten do not continue to walk on them, it could cause more damage. Use warm water to help restart circulation; never rub the area it could cause the frostbite to spread. Never use a fireplace, stove, or other heat source to warm up. Since the skin is numb you could get to close and cause burns.

How to Prevent Cold Stress

There are simple and easy ways to prevent cold stress in the workplace. It is really all about working safely and wearing the right protective gear. This is the best way to prevent cold stress in the workplace.



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- Wear insulated work boots and wool socks.
- Never wear tight clothing. You must allow room for air to circulate.
- Keep a change of socks and other clothing to switch into if anything you are wearing gets wet.
- Wear gloves and a hat always.
- Keep warm by drinking hot liquids such as tea, coffee, and hot chocolate. You can also eat soup at lunch to help warm up your core temperature.
- If possible, take your breaks in a warm area. If there is no building available, you can sit in your truck with the heat on.

Preventing cold stress in the workplace is very important. Many people are unaware that the cold can seriously injury or in extreme cases be fatal if the proper safety precautions are not followed.