

# TOOLBOX TALK

## HEAT ILLNESS

Heat illness can occur when your body temperature rises only a few degrees above normal (98.6°) and is most often associated with working outside in hot/humid conditions, generally when ambient temperatures exceed 85 degrees. In this toolbox talk we will define heat illness, look at the various heat-induced illnesses, and how to prevent and treat heat illness.

### What is Heat Illness?

- Heat illness occurs when the body is unable to cool itself by sweating.
- Heat illness can lead to heat rash, heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

### Symptoms of Heat Rash

- A rash or small blisters on the skin

### Symptoms of Heat Cramps:

- Heavy sweating, lightheadedness, or dizziness.
- Painful, involuntary muscle spasms usually in the arms, legs, and abdomen.

### Symptoms of Heat Exhaustion:

- Headache, dizziness, lightheadedness, fast pulse, and fainting.
- Weakness, heavy sweating, and moist, cold and clammy skin.
- Mood changes, irritability, confusion.
- Nausea, vomiting.

### Symptoms of Heat Stroke (the most dangerous):

- Dry, high body temperature, hot skin with **no sweating**.
- Mental confusion, dizziness, or loss of consciousness.
- Seizures or convulsions.
- Can be **fatal**.

### Preventing Heat Illness:

- Know the signs and symptoms of heat related illnesses.
- Block out sun or other heat sources.
- Use fans and/or A.C. units; take breaks in a shady or cool area
- In high heat, drink 1 cup of water or electrolyte sport drink (Gatorade) every 15 minutes.
- Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothes.
- Avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, and/or heavy meals.
- Wear sunscreen of SPF 15, or greater, and reapply every 2 hours.

### How to Treat Heat-Related Illness

- Seek immediate medical attention from the set medic and/or call 911.

### While Waiting

- Move crew member to cool, shaded area.

- Loosen or remove heavy clothing.
- Keep the head and shoulders slightly elevated.
- If conscious, provide cool drinking water or electrolyte sport drink only.
- Place an ice pack in the armpits or groin area.
- Fan and mist person with water.

**Understanding heat illness may save your life, so please in hot weather watch for symptoms, drink plenty of water and report any signs of heat illness to your supervisor.**