

Know the signs of heat-related illness

The warmest months of the year can bring temperatures in the U.S. to well above 90 degrees Fahrenheit with a potential to go above 100 degrees — increasing the risk of heat-related illness (HRI).

Being aware of the symptoms, controls and first aid tips will help you and your teams mitigate the potential for HRI.

HEAT ILLNESS	SYMPTOMS	TREATMENT*
Heat exhaustion	<p>Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through sweating.</p> <p>Heat exhaustion can kill or permanently disable. Take immediate action if the following symptoms are noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Heavy sweating. ■ Rapid heartbeat. ■ Blurred vision. ■ Headaches. ■ Dizziness. ■ Confusion. ■ Irritability. ■ Moist, cool skin and a weak pulse. <p><i>Additionally, the judgement of a heat exhaustion victim may become clouded and they may insist they are OK.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Medical attention must be sought immediately. Contact a supervisor or call 911. ■ Move the victim to a cool, shaded area. ■ Cool the victim by soaking with water or sponging with a cool, wet cloth. ■ About 8 ounces of water should be consumed by the victim every 15 minutes.
Heat stroke	<p>Heat stroke is a condition that occurs when the body's internal cooling system has shut down and cannot control its temperature.</p> <p>Heat stroke can kill or permanently disable. Take immediate action if the following symptoms are noted:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ High body temperature. ■ Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating. ■ Confusion. ■ Loss of coordination. ■ Throbbing headache. ■ Seizures, coma. <p><i>Additionally, a heat stroke victim may become delirious or go into convulsions.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Medical attention must be sought immediately. Contact a supervisor or call 911. ■ Start first aid immediately. Remove outer clothing and cool the victim's entire body by spraying or sponging with a cool, wet cloth. ■ Apply ice packs to the neck, groin and armpits if possible. This helps cool the blood, which cools the body. ■ Fan air over the victim to help create air flow until help arrives.

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<p>Heat rash</p>	<p>Perspiration stays on the skin too long and the sweat glands are clogged, which produces a hot, prickly sensation and small blisters.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Allow the rash area to air dry. ■ Clean with a mild soap, rinse and pat dry. ■ Avoid irritating the skin.
<p>Heat cramps</p>	<p>Heavy sweating, with extended period of heat exposure. The cramps result from loss of water, salt and other minerals.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Water alone will not replenish the salt and minerals needed to prevent the heat cramps. ■ Consume sports drinks when working in hot environments for extended periods.

BE PROACTIVE TO DECREASE YOUR RISK

Supervisors should continually monitor conditions on their jobsites to ensure workers are doing all they can to prevent and protect employees against HRI.

Limit exposure by:

- Monitoring your physical condition (and your co-workers) for signs or symptoms of an HRI.
- Wearing light-colored, loose-fitting, breathable clothing such as cotton.
 - Avoiding non-breathable synthetic clothing.
 - Remembering that protective clothing or personal protective equipment may increase the risk of HRIs.
- Gradually building up to heavy work and scheduling heavy work during the coolest parts of day.
- Taking more breaks when doing heavier work and in high heat and humidity.
 - Finding a cool or shady area to take breaks.
- Drinking water frequently — enough that you are never thirsty.
- Taking necessary steps to provide first aid when HRI symptoms are identified.
- Requesting immediate assistance if heat stroke symptoms are identified.

**The forgoing treatment tips are provided by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) at: [osha.gov/heat-exposure/illness-first-aid](https://www.osha.gov/heat-exposure/illness-first-aid).*

Work with your UFG Risk Control consultant on improving your HRI risk.

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