



Rhode Island Local Technical Assistance Program

Everyday Safety Talks

Keep Your Cool by Being Smart in the Heat

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Every year, dozens of workers die and thousands more become ill while working in hot or humid conditions. Both the OSHA Heat Illness Prevention campaign and the National Weather Service summer campaign seek to educate employers and workers on the dangers of working in the heat.

KNOW THE SIGNS!

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<div style="border: 1px solid #f4a460; padding: 5px; margin-bottom: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">ACT FAST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move to a cooler area • Loosen clothing • Sip cool water • Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve </div> <div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <p><i>Dizziness</i></p> <p><i>Thirst</i></p> <p><i>Heavy Sweating</i></p> <p><i>Nausea</i></p> <p><i>Weakness</i></p> </div>	<div style="display: flex; flex-direction: column; gap: 10px;"> <p><i>Confusion</i></p> <p><i>Dizziness</i></p> <p><i>Becomes Unconscious</i></p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid #e91e63; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">ACT FAST</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CALL 911</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Move person to a cooler area • Loosen clothing and remove extra layers • Cool with water or ice </div>
<p><i>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.</i></p> <p><i>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.</i></p>	
<p style="font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.2em;">Stay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed!</p>	

During hot and humid weather, your body's ability to cool itself is challenged in ways you may not expect. When your body heats too rapidly, or when too much fluid or salt is lost through dehydration or sweating, you may experience a heat-related illness. Stay Weather-Ready by learning the symptoms of excessive heat exposure and the appropriate responses.

It is important to know the symptoms of excessive heat exposure and the appropriate responses. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a list of warning signs and symptoms of heat illness and recommended first aid steps. Some of these symptoms and steps are listed below.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps may be the first sign of heat-related illness, and may lead to heat exhaustion or stroke.

- **Symptoms:** Painful muscle cramps and spasms usually in the legs and abdomen and heavy sweating.
- **First Aid:** Apply firm pressure on cramping muscles or gently massage to relieve spasms. Give sips of water unless the person complains of nausea, then stop giving water.

Seek immediate medical attention if cramps last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Exhaustion

- **Symptoms:** Heavy sweating, weakness or tiredness, cool, pale, clammy skin; fast, weak pulse, muscle cramps, dizziness, nausea or vomiting, headache, fainting.
- **First Aid:** Move the person to a cooler environment, **preferably to a well-air-conditioned room**. Loosen clothing and apply cool, wet cloths, or have the person sit in a cool bath. Offer sips of water.

Seek immediate medical attention if the person vomits, symptoms worsen, or last longer than 1 hour.

Heat Stroke

- **Symptoms:** Throbbing headache, confusion, nausea, dizziness, body temperature above 103°F, hot, red, dry or damp skin, rapid and strong pulse, fainting, loss of consciousness.
- **First Aid: Call 911 or get the victim to a hospital immediately.** Heat stroke is a severe medical emergency. Delay can be fatal. Move the victim to a cooler, preferably air-conditioned, environment. Reduce body temperature with cool cloths or a cool to lukewarm bath. Use a fan if the heat index temperatures are below the high 90s. A fan can make you hotter at higher temperatures. Do **NOT** give fluids.

Be Aware: Using a fan to blow air in someone's direction may actually make them hotter if heat index temperatures are above the 90s.

For additional information and resources visit:

- <https://www.weather.gov/safety/heat-illness>
- <https://www.osha.gov/heat>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/disasters/extremeheat/warning.html>

For more information on this, and other health-related issues that impact workers, visit OSHA's Web site at www.osha.gov