

Brothers and Sisters,

Please look out for one another as we face the next several days of extremely high, dangerous temperatures. If you experience any of the following symptoms, please take the appropriate action listed below (from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention). Also, please consider downloading the OSHA Heat Safety Tool app: www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/heat_index/heat_app.html

HEAT STROKE

This medical condition is life-threatening. The person's cooling system, which is controlled by the brain, has stopped working, and the internal temperature has risen to the point where brain damage or damage to other internal organs may result (temperature may reach 105°F or above).

Signs, Symptoms & Risks

- Red, hot, and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Mental confusion
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Convulsions
- Unconsciousness
- Coma
- Sweating stops and the body can no longer rid itself of excess heat

Treatments

- Call emergency personnel
- Immerse the victim in a tub of cool water
- Place the person in a cool shower
- Spray the victim with cool water from a garden hose; sponge the person with cool water, or if the humidity is low, wrap victim in a cool, wet sheet and fan him or her vigorously
- While awaiting medical help, the victim must be removed to a cool area and clothing should be soaked with cool water
- He or she should be fanned vigorously to increase cooling
- Prompt first aid can prevent permanent injury to the brain and other vital organs

Control Measures

- Engineering controls including general ventilation and spot cooling by local exhaust ventilation at points of high heat production may be helpful
- Shielding is required as protection from radiant heat sources
- Evaporative cooling and mechanical refrigeration are other ways to reduce heat
- Cooling fans can also reduce heat in hot conditions
- Equipment modifications, the use of power tools to reduce manual labor and personal cooling devices
- Protective clothing can reduce the hazards of heat exposure for workers. Wear wide brimmed hats and loose fitting, long-sleeved, light colored clothing
- Allow for regular breaks, and pace yourself by starting slowly and gradually picking up the pace.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

Although heat exhaustion isn't as serious as heat stroke, it isn't something to be taken lightly. Without proper intervention, heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke, which can damage the brain and other vital organs, and even cause death.

Signs, Symptoms & Risks

- Confusion
- Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration)
- Dizziness
- Fainting
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Muscle or abdominal cramps
- Nausea, vomiting or diarrhea
- Pale skin
- Profuse sweating
- Rapid heartbeat

Treatment

- Drink plenty of fluid (avoid caffeine and alcohol)
- Remove any tight or unnecessary clothing
- Take a cool shower, bath, or sponge bath
- Apply other cooling measures, such as fans or ice towels
- If such measures fail to provide relief within 15 minutes, seek emergency medical help, because untreated heat exhaustion can progress to heat stroke

The risk of heat-related illness dramatically increases when the heat index climbs to 90 degrees or more. So it's important -- especially during heat waves -- to pay attention to the reported heat index, and also to remember that the heat index is even higher when you are standing in full sunshine.