

Working safely in hot conditions

Heat illness prevention

Key takeaways:

- Heat illness can be prevented through hydration, shade breaks, and limiting heat absorption.
- Heat exhaustion symptoms include dizziness, headache, sweaty skin, fast heartbeat, nausea, weakness, and cramps.
- Heat stroke symptoms include red hot dry skin, high temperature, confusion, fainting, and convulsions.
- Train your employees on symptoms of heat illness and have an emergency plan in place should someone suffer from it.

As air temperatures rise, our bodies don't have gauges like the ones we check to make sure a machine isn't overheating. Working in hot conditions means we must know how to prevent heat illness, recognize signs of heat illness, and know how to respond should someone experience a heat illness.

Prevention is key!

- Whether you are thirsty or not, drink water every 15 minutes. Signs of thirst are a sign that your body is already dehydrated.
- Wear light-colored clothing (dark colors soak up heat from the sun).
- Take rests in the shade.
- Watch out for each other and look for signs of heat illness.

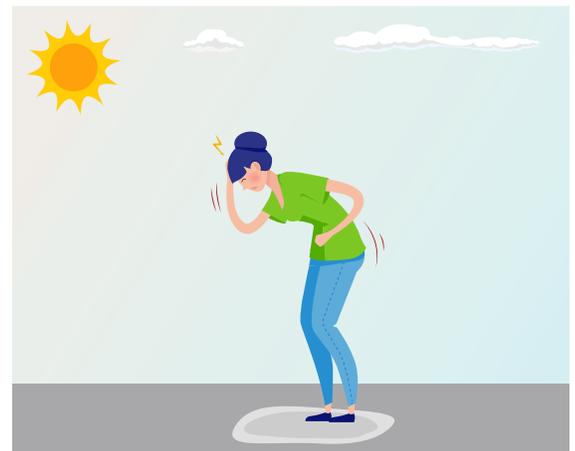
Signs of heat illness are essential to know.

- Heat exhaustion symptoms are dizziness, headache, sweaty skin, fast heartbeat, nausea/vomiting, weakness and cramps.
- Heat stroke signs include red, hot, dry skin; high temperature; confusion; fainting; and convulsions. Heat stroke

requires immediate intervention. For more information on the differences between heat exhaustion and a heat stroke, see our document (saif.com/S1106).

- Seek medical treatment when any of these signs or symptoms are present!

Plan to prevent anybody from suffering heat illnesses. Create work plans that include water, shade, and rest. Train employees on signs to watch for, and have an emergency plan to swiftly seek help should someone start to experience symptoms.



Take action (Complete one or more activities as a team)

- FIELD TRIP:** Locate the best shaded areas for breaks on your job site. Locate water stations within those shaded areas as well.
- DISCUSSION:** As a team, discuss how workflow or schedules can best encourage hydration, necessary restroom access, and shade breaks. Consider personal water bottles, cooling towels or neck bands, cooling stations, and other equipment that might help keep teammates cool.
- DRILL:** Assume someone has experienced heat illness. Walk through an emergency drill of seeking medical care and necessary communications.

