

Heat Stress

About 10 minutes to deliver

Drink early, rest in the shade, watch your buddy — and how to tell heat exhaustion from the emergency that kills.

Heat kills workers every summer, and it almost always kills people who were showing symptoms for a while first. The two things that decide the outcome are whether somebody noticed, and how fast they acted.

PREVENTION

- Drink before you are thirsty. Roughly a cup every 15–20 minutes in the heat. Thirst is a late signal, and by the time you feel it you are already behind.
- Rest in the shade, not in the sun with your shirt off. Cooling only happens somewhere cooler.
- New and returning workers are the highest risk. Most heat deaths happen in the first few days on the job, before the body adapts. Build up over a week — and someone back from a fortnight's holiday is a new worker again.
- Watch what else is loading you. Heavy PPE, respirators, dark clothing, no breeze, high humidity. Humidity matters more than temperature, because sweat that cannot evaporate does not cool you.
- Schedule the heaviest work for the coolest part of the day where the job allows.

HEAT EXHAUSTION — ACT NOW

Heavy sweating, cold clammy skin, weakness, dizziness, nausea, headache, fast weak pulse.

Stop work. Get them to shade or air conditioning. Loosen clothing. Cool with wet cloths or a fan. Sips of water. If they are not clearly improving in 15 minutes, or cannot keep water down, call for help.

HEAT STROKE — CALL 911

Body hot to touch. Skin may be dry or may still be sweating. Confusion, slurred speech, staggering, collapse, seizure.

This is a medical emergency and people die from it in minutes.

- Call 911 first.
- Cool aggressively while you wait — ice packs to the neck, armpits and groin, cold water, shade, fan. Cold water immersion if you can do it safely.
- Do not give fluids to someone confused or unconscious.
- Never leave them alone.

THE BUDDY SYSTEM

Confusion is a symptom, which means the person in trouble is the least able to recognise it. Somebody else has to notice. If a workmate is acting oddly, stumbling, or has gone quiet, treat it as heat until proven otherwise.

ASK THE CREW

- Where is the water and the shade on this site, and is it close enough to actually use?
- Is anyone new this week, or back from time off?
- Who is calling 911 if it happens, and what is the address here?

29 CFR 1926.20 · OSH Act § 5(a)(1)

This is a toolbox talk, not a course. It is general awareness on one topic — not site-specific, not a hazard assessment, and not a substitute for assessment of your workplace by a competent person, your written programs, or manufacturers' instructions. It does not by itself satisfy any OSHA training requirement. Regulations change; verify against the current standard. Whoever delivers it is responsible for deciding it is suitable and sufficient for the work. Where a talk covers first aid, resuscitation, or mental health it is general safety information, not medical advice, not a substitute for professional medical care or certified emergency-response training, and it confers no certification — in an emergency, call 911. Free to print and use, as is, with no warranty of any kind. Migna Safety Solutions · training.mignasafetysolutions.com

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ATTENDANCE RECORD

Heat Stress

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Date

Job / site

Delivered by

Company

#	Print name	Signature	Date
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I delivered this talk and determined it was suitable for this crew and this work.

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