

SAFETY SESSION TRAINING
FIRST AID FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS

Summer is here - do you know basic first-aid procedures for heat injuries? As an employee, it's likely that you will be working outside where temperatures will reach the high 90s or even low 100s. When you work in the sun, pay particular attention to how you feel under the effects of heat, and humidity. When you work tirelessly or carelessly in the summer heat, you are setting the stage for an accident or a heat-related illness.

Heat-related illnesses are a real danger during the hot months of summer. Don't take a "don't worry, you'll get used to the temperature" attitude.

Heat Stroke or hyperthermia: A life-threatening medical emergency that occurs when the body overheats and internal systems begin to shut down. Some of the signs and symptoms of heat stroke include hot, dry skin, rapid pulse and breathing, weakness, dizziness, strange behavior or hallucinations, unconsciousness, or any combination of these symptoms. If a victim's normal temperature is not quickly restored, the individual will die or be permanently disabled. All heat stroke victims need immediate medical treatment. If you suspect heat stroke: call 911. While you're waiting for paramedics to arrive, cool the victim by fanning, removing heavy clothing, and/or wetting his or her clothing.

Heat Exhaustion: Occurs when the body's heat-control mechanism is overactive. Signs and symptoms may include: heavy sweating, intense thirst, cool and moist skin, weak and rapid pulse, fatigue, loss of coordination, or any combination of these symptoms. First-aid treatment includes moving the person to the shade, loosening clothing, elevating the legs, and cooling the victim by applying cold packs wrapped in towels or wet towels as soon as possible. Watch the individual for about 30 minutes. If his or her condition does not improve, seek medical attention.

Heat Cramps: Painful muscle spasms or cramps in the abdomen, arms, or legs caused by an excessive loss of body fluid through sweating. Treatment for heat cramps is similar to that for heat exhaustion: rest in the shade and cool off. While heat cramps are painful, they don't usually result in permanent damage.

Consider the following guidelines to help you prevent heat-related emergencies: Keep out of direct sunlight during the hottest hours of the day (11am to 4pm); wear lightweight cotton and light-colored clothing; stay hydrated by drinking lots of water; avoid alcohol, caffeinated drinks, and heavy meals during hot days; pace yourself by taking regular breaks to cool down; and seek prompt medical attention if you begin to feel ill.

Watch your coworkers for signs of heat-related illnesses. Remind them to stay hydrated and take frequent breaks.

Session Instructed By: _____ Date: _____

ATTENDEE SIGNATURES:

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