

## Beat the Heat

**Heat stroke** is the most serious heat related health problem... It occurs when the body's temperature regulatory system fails and sweating becomes inadequate. A heat stroke victim's skin is hot, usually dry, red or spotted. Body temperature is usually 105°F or higher, and the victim is mentally confused, delirious, perhaps in convulsions, or unconscious. Unless the victim receives quick and appropriate treatment, death can occur. Any person with signs or symptoms of heat stroke requires immediate hospitalization

**Heat exhaustion** is caused by the loss of large amounts of body fluid by sweating, sometimes with excessive loss of salt. A person suffering from heat exhaustion still sweats but experiences extreme weakness or fatigue, giddiness, nausea, or headache. In more serious cases, the victim may vomit or lose consciousness. The skin is clammy and moist, the complexion is pale or flushed, and the body temperature is normal or only slightly elevated.



**Heat cramps** are painful spasms of the muscles that occur among those who sweat profusely in heat, drink large quantities of water, but do not adequately replace the body's salt loss. The drinking of large quantities of water tends to dilute the body's fluids, while the body continues to lose salt.

### **Heat Stress Protection**

To keep internal body temperatures within safe limits, the body sheds excess heat through increased blood circulation and the release of fluid onto the skin by the sweat glands. Evaporation of sweat cools the skin, eliminating large quantities of heat from the body.

### **Safety Problems**

Certain safety problems are common to hot environments. Heat tends to promote accidents due to the slipperiness of sweaty palms, dizziness, or the fogging of safety glasses.

### **Smart Heat Safety Guidelines**

- Don't wear dark, tight fitting clothes
- Don't eat heavy meals before working in the heat
- Cover as much of your body as possible
- Keep drinking water close by
- Don't drink alcohol or drinks with caffeine
- Know and react to symptoms of heat related health problems

### **Drinking Water**

During a day's work in the heat, a person may produce as much as 2 to 3 gallons of sweat. It is important that water intake during the workday be about equal to the amount of sweat produced. Don't depend on thirst to signal when and how much to drink; instead, drink *at least* one to two cups of water approximately every half hour to stay ahead of dehydration.