



Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke

When working during hot weather we may suffer heat exhaustion or sunstroke. Heat exhaustion is caused by the loss of body salt and sunstroke occurs when the body mechanism is not able to keep the system cool. Following are the symptoms of these ailments and the steps we should take to aid the victim.

Symptoms: The first signs of heat exhaustion are dizziness, weakness, headache, blurred vision, nausea and staggering. The face becomes pale, there is profuse sweating, the pulse is weak, and breathing is shallow. The person may become unconscious.

Treatment: When someone shows symptoms of heat exhaustion, immediately remove that person to a place where the air is circulating freely. Make the person lie down and keep him or her warm. If the victim is conscious, add a teaspoon of salt to a pint of cool water and give this to the victim in small sips at frequent intervals. If the heat exhaustion symptoms persist, call the doctor.

What to drink: *Water is one of the best things to drink.* Research also shows that a lightly flavored beverage with a small amount of sodium encourages people to drink enough to stay hydrated. The combination of flavor and electrolytes in a sports drink like Gatorade provides one of the best choices to help you stay properly hydrated.

How to Avoid: Keep in good physical condition and stop to rest when you begin to feel faint. Increase dietary salt and fluids when working in extremely hot weather.

SUNSTROKE (HEATSTROKE) Symptoms: The victim develops a severe headache, the face is red the skin is hot and dry, there is no sweating, and the pulse is very strong and very rapid. The person has a high fever (105°–106°F.) and may become unconscious. This is followed by convulsions, coma, and sometimes death.

Treatment: Get the victim to where there's professional medical treatment as soon as possible. In the meantime place the individual in the shade. Loosen the clothing and cool the victim with the best means available. If the individual's temperature starts to drop, cover with a light blanket so that the sudden change in body temperature won't cause shivering or convulsions.

How to Avoid: Stay away from alcoholic beverages. Instead, drink water, lemonade, or citrus fruit juices. Wear clothing that is lightweight, well ventilated, and loose. Replace the body salt lost through perspiration by making sure your salt and fluid intake is adequate.

Know the Difference: Become familiar with the symptoms of sun-stroke and heat exhaustion. As we've discussed, the treatment for each of these ailments is different and knowing the differences could mean life or death.

Are there any questions or concerns on this topic?

Presenter, please write any questions or concerns that you are unable to answer on the back of this sheet along with a note and we'll help with a clarification or take a look at the issue.

I have verbally and in person read and reviewed the above safety information with all employees assigned to the toolbox talk. We discussed all questions, comments and concerns.

Supervisor's Signature _____ Location _____ Date _____



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Date: _____

Facilitator: _____ Project: _____

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