



## SAFETY MATTERS

RISK MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

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## HEAT ILLNESS SAFETY

**OBJECTIVE** To be able to recognize the various kinds of heat illness and know what to do for each.

### HEAT RASH

Areas of the skin itch intensely and often feel prickly and swollen due to overheating. Sweat glands get plugged due to too much heat, humidity, and sweat.

**Treatment:**

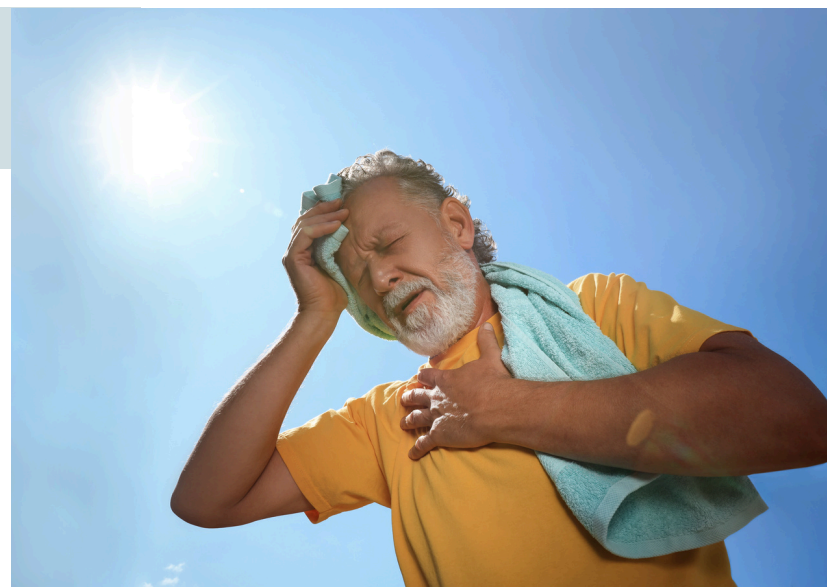
- Keep skin clean and dry
- Rest in a cool area
- Drink water and change clothes frequently to stay dry

### HEAT CRAMPS

Painful muscle cramps, usually in the legs or near the stomach (abdomen), are caused by losing too much salt through sweating. This is a warning that more serious heat illness can develop.

**Treatment:**

- Take rest breaks in a cooler environment
- Drink water
- Remove any personal protective equipment (PPE) and loosen tight-fitting clothing
- If possible, have the person lie down



### HEAT EXHAUSTION

When fluids are not replaced, excessive loss of water and salt occurs through sweating. The person may become tired, weak and dizzy, and have damp or clammy skin. This is a serious condition.

**Treatment:**

- Have the person rest in a cool area and drink water if he or she is not nauseous
- If possible, have the person lie down with knees raised
- Loosen tight-fitting clothing
- Seek medical aid
- Notify your supervisor





## HEAT STROKE

This is a life-threatening condition in which the body's core temperature rises above 105°F (41°C) and vital functions begin to break down, including a person's mental functions. Without immediate medical help, heat stroke may result in permanent brain damage or death.

**Treatment:**

- **MEDICAL EMERGENCY: Seek immediate medical help!**
- Move the person to a cool area
- Loosen clothing; put a cool, wet cloth under the person's armpits and on the groin; and use a fan to create air movement
- Avoid extreme cold because the body can go into shock
- Do NOT take the person to the hospital in a hot car; call an ambulance

It is important to recognize the symptoms of heat illness during its early stages to avoid more serious illnesses. Please be aware that not all of these signs and symptoms may be present or occur in any particular order, and that individuals may react differently to excessive heat.

## EMERGENCY MEDICAL RESPONSE (911) SHOULD BE CONTACTED IF:

- An employee is showing symptoms of possible heat illness and no first aid/CPR-trained person is available
- An employee is showing symptoms of possible heat exhaustion (such as dizziness or pale, clammy skin) or heat stroke (like convulsions, seizures and mental confusion)
- Loosen clothing; put a cool, wet cloth under the person's armpits and on the groin; and use a fan to create air movement
- An employee does not improve with cooling and hydration, or if changes in mental state are observed

Also please remember to:

- Notify your supervisor
- Call 911
- Make sure to provide medical emergency personnel with the right address and directions to locate the sick worker within the facility
- Have one person stay with the sick worker while another calls for help



Your district's procedures should also include taking immediate steps to keep an affected individual cool and comfortable once emergency service responders have been called. The goal is to reduce the progression to more serious illness (which can be rapid and include symptoms such as loss of consciousness, seizures, and mental confusion).

### **SYMPTOMS OF HEAT ILLNESS: BE AWARE, CAUTION, DANGER**

<b>BE AWARE</b>	<b>CAUTION: TELL YOUR SUPERVISOR</b>	<b>DANGER! CALL 911</b>
Sweating profusely	Nausea	Confusion
Tiredness	Dizziness	Convulsions
Skin rashes	Headache	Vomiting
Feeling thirsty	Irritability	Loss of coordination
		Fainting
		Pale, clammy skin
		Dry, red, hot skin

## RESOURCES

[Occupational Safety and Health Administration: Heat Illness Prevention](#)

[The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health](#)

[CA Department of Industrial Relations](#)

[CA Department of Public Health: Extreme Heat Guidance for Schools](#)

*This California Schools JPA fact sheet is not intended to be exhaustive. The discussion and best practices suggested herein should not be regarded as legal advice. Readers should pursue legal counsel or contact their insurance providers to gain more exhaustive advice.*

