

Working in the Summer Heat

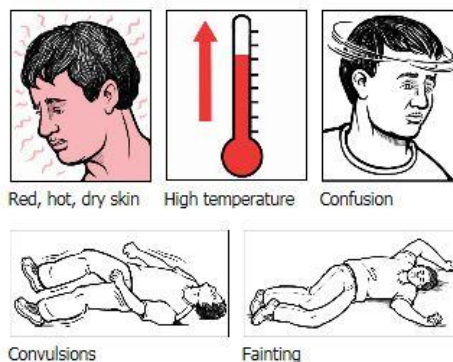
Heat-related illnesses can be deadly. Thousands become sick every year and many die due to preventable heat-related illnesses. In 2014 alone, 2,630 workers suffered from heat illness and 18 died from heat stroke and related causes on the job. With summer temperatures rising, now is the best time to prepare for working outdoors in excessive heat by following a few simple steps.

HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS: KNOW THE SIGNS

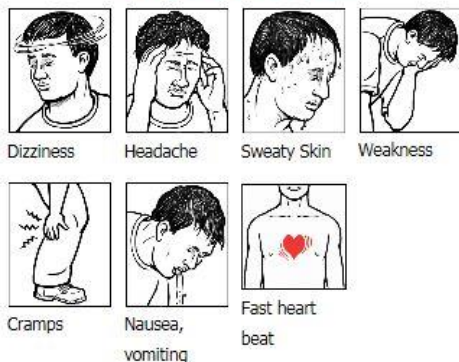
It's important to know the signs of heat-related illness—acting quickly can prevent more serious medical conditions and may even save lives.

Heat Stroke is the most serious heat-related illness and requires immediate medical attention. Symptoms include: confusion, fainting, seizures, very high body temperature and hot, dry skin or profuse sweating. **CALL 911** if a coworker shows signs of heat stroke.

Heat Stroke



Heat Exhaustion



Heat Exhaustion is also a serious illness. Symptoms include: headache, nausea, dizziness, weakness, thirst and heavy sweating. **Heat fatigue**, and **heat rash** are less serious, but they are still signs of too much heat exposure.

If you or a coworker has symptoms of heat-related illness, **tell your supervisor right away**. If you can, move the person to a shaded area loosen his/her clothing, give him/her water (a little at a time), and cool him/her down with ice packs or cool water.

TO PREVENT HEAT ILLNESS:



- Drink water every 15 minutes, even if you are not thirsty.
- Rest in the shade to cool down.
- Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
- Learn the signs of heat illness and what to do in an emergency.
- Keep an eye on fellow workers.
- Acclimate – "easy does it" on your first days of work; be sure to get used to the heat and allow yourself to build up a tolerance. Not being used to the heat is a big problem. Many of the people who died from heat stress were either new to working in the heat or returning from a break. If a worker has not worked in hot weather for a week or more, their body needs time to adjust.

EMPLOYERS MUST PROTECT WORKERS FROM EXCESSIVE HEAT.

Under OSHA law, employers are responsible for providing workplaces free of known safety hazards which include protecting employees from extreme heat.

For additional resources on staying healthy in the heat, visit [OSHA's website](#), download [the app](#) to calculate the heat index and receive recommendations based on the risk level, or check out [IRMA's online training materials](#) for your next staff safety training.