GPS
Your Employment Navigator

Prevent Heat Illness at Work

OSHA®
osha.gov/heat

The National Weather Service (NWS) uses a heat index (HI) to classify environmental heat into four categories:

- Caution (80°F – 90°F HI);
- Extreme Caution (91°F – 103°F HI);
- Danger (103°F – 124°F HI); and,
- Extreme Danger (126°F or higher HI).

Personal Risk Factors

- Obesity (body mass index ≥ 30 kg/m^2)
- Diabetes
- High blood pressure
- Heart disease
- Lower level of physical fitness
- Use of certain medications such as diuretics (water pills) and some psychiatric or blood pressure medicines
- Some medications can result in a worker's inability to feel heat conditions and/or the inability to sweat, so symptoms of heat stress may not be evident.
- Alcohol use
- Use of illicit drugs such as opioids, methamphetamine, or cocaine

Prevention

Watch out for each other

Verbally check on workers wearing face coverings

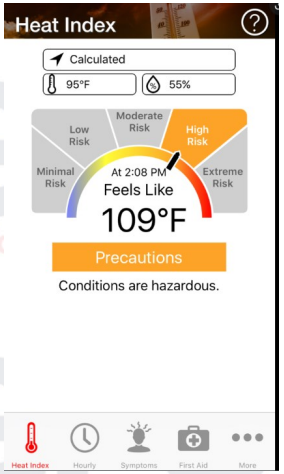
Drink cool water even if you are not thirsty

Rest for long enough to recover from the heat

Take breaks in a shady or cool area

The OSHA-NIOSH Heat Safety Tool App is a resource for finding the current and forecasted heat index near your location.

- Caution less than 80°F HI;
- Warning 80°F to 94°F HI;



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Take the affected worker to a cooler area (e.g., shade or air conditioning).
Cool the worker immediately. Use active cooling techniques such as:

- Immerse the worker in cold water or an ice bath. Create the ice bath by placing all of the available ice into a large container with water, standard practice in sports. **This is the best method to cool workers rapidly in an emergency**.
- Remove outer layers of clothing, especially heavy protective clothing.
- Place ice or cold wet towels on the head, neck, trunk, armpits, and groin.
- Use fans to circulate air around the worker.
- Never leave a worker with heat-related illness alone. The illness can rapidly become worse. Stay with the worker.
- When in doubt, call 911

Heat-Related Illnesses	Symptoms and Signs
Heat stroke- It occurs when the body can no longer control its temperature: the body's temperature rises rapidly, the sweating mechanism fails, and the body is unable to cool down. When heat stroke occurs, the body temperature can rise to 106°F or higher within 10 to 15 minutes.	Confusion Slurred speech Unconsciousness Seizures Heavy sweating or hot, dry skin Very high body temperature Rapid heart rate
Heat exhaustion-a condition of fatigue and weakness, usually with normal body temperature, resulting from prolonged exposure to heat.	Fatigue Irritability Thirst Nausea or vomiting Dizziness or lightheadedness Heavy sweating Elevated body temperature or fast heart rate
Heat cramps-are painful, involuntary muscle spasms that usually occur during heavy exercise in hot environments. The spasms may be more intense and more prolonged than are typical nighttime leg cramps. Fluid and electrolyte loss often contribute to heat cramps.	Muscle spasms or pain Usually in legs, arms, or trunk
Heat syncope-is a fainting (syncope) episode or dizziness that usually occurs when standing for too long or suddenly standing up after sitting or lying. Factors that may contribute to heat syncope include dehydration and lack of acclimatization.	Fainting Dizziness
Heat rash-is common during hot, humid weather. The rash may appear as blisters or red bumps. Heat rash may cause itchiness or a prickly feeling.	Clusters of red bumps on skin Often appears on neck, upper chest, and skin folds
Rhabdomyolysis (muscle breakdown)- A breakdown of muscle tissue that releases a damaging protein into the blood.	Muscle pain Dark urine or reduced urine output Weakness