



Milwaukee County Safety Toolbox Talks

June 30, 2023

The Risk Management Team Heat Related Illness

Facts

Heat-related illnesses are a leading cause of death from natural weather or environmental events. When the human body is unable to maintain a normal temperature, heat illnesses can occur and may result in death. Estimating the public health impact of extreme heat is difficult because hospitals and health care providers are not required to report heat-related illnesses, such as heat stroke and heat exhaustion, to public health agencies. To estimate the number of deaths associated with exposure to extreme heat, the CDC uses death certificates. This data is used to determine the annual number of deaths that list exposure to excessive natural heat as the underlying cause, that record hyperthermia as a contributing factor, or both. During 2004–2018, an average of 702 heat-related deaths (415 with heat as the underlying cause and 287 as a contributing cause) occurred in the United States annually.



The scoop of the day

Types of Heat Related Illnesses

Heat Stroke

Heat stroke is the **most serious** heat-related illness. 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. Heat stroke can cause permanent disability or death if the person does not receive emergency treatment.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating. Symptoms of heat exhaustion can include dizziness, headache, nausea, muscle cramps and others.

Heat Cramps

Heat cramps usually affect workers who sweat a lot during strenuous activity. This sweating depletes the body's salt and moisture levels. Low salt levels in muscles cause painful cramps.

Heat Rash

Heat rash is a skin irritation caused by excessive sweating during hot, humid weather.

Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
<p>ACT FAST</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move to a cooler area Loosen clothing Sip cool water Seek medical help if symptoms don't improve 	<p>ACT FAST</p> <p>CALL 911</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Move person to a cooler area Loosen clothing and remove extra layers Cool with water or ice
<p>Dizziness</p> <p>Thirst</p> <p>Heavy Sweating</p> <p>Nausea</p> <p>Weakness</p>	<p>Confusion</p> <p>Dizziness</p> <p>Becomes Unconscious</p>
<p><i>Heat exhaustion can lead to heat stroke.</i></p>	<p><i>Heat stroke can cause death or permanent disability if emergency treatment is not given.</i></p>
<p> Slay Cool, Stay Hydrated, Stay Informed! </p>	

Tip #1

Workers at greater risk of heat stress include those who are 65 years of age or older, are overweight, have heart disease or high blood pressure, or take medications that may be affected by extreme heat.

Tip #2

Steps to avoid heat illnesses include hydration (Drink water every 15 minutes), taking rest breaks in the shade, and wearing lightweight, light colored, loose-fitting clothes.

Tip #3

Recognizing signs/symptoms of heat illnesses, utilizing a monitoring buddy system, and acclimating slowly to a hot environment are crucial to staying safe.