

Heat Stroke and Exhaustion

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.

Symptoms

- Confusion, altered mental status, slurred speech
- Loss of consciousness (coma)
- Hot, dry skin or profuse sweating
- Seizures
- Very high body temperature
- Fatal if treatment delayed



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First Aid

- Call 911 for emergency medical care.
- Stay with the worker until emergency medical services arrive.
- Move the worker to a shaded, cool area and remove outer clothing.
- Cool the worker quickly, using the following methods:
 - With a cold water or ice bath, if possible
 - Wet the skin
 - Place cold wet cloths on the skin
 - Soak clothing with cool water
- Circulate the air around the worker to speed cooling.
- Place cold wet cloths or ice on the head, neck, armpits, and groin; or soak the clothing with cool water.

Heat Exhaustion

Heat exhaustion is the body's response to an excessive loss of water and salt, usually through excessive sweating. Heat exhaustion is most likely to affect:

- The elderly
- People with high blood pressure
- Those working in a hot environment

Symptoms

- Headache
- Nausea
- Dizziness
- Weakness
- Irritability
- Thirst
- Heavy sweating
- Elevated body temperature
- Decreased urine output

First Aid

- Take worker to a clinic or emergency room for medical evaluation and treatment.
- Call 911 if medical care is unavailable.
- Have someone stay with the worker until help arrives.
- Remove the worker from the hot area and give liquids to drink.
- Remove unnecessary clothing, including shoes and socks.
- Cool the worker with cold compresses or have the worker wash their head, face, and neck with cold water.
- Encourage frequent sips of cool water.

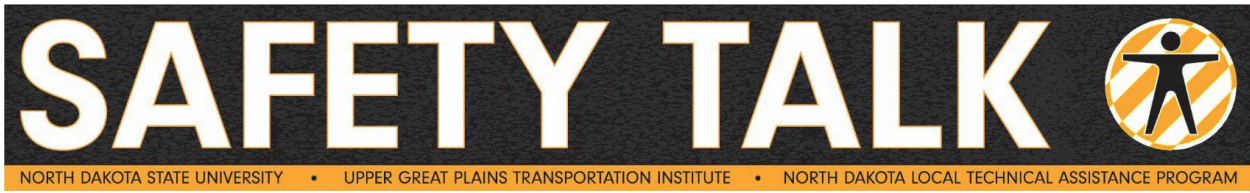
Additional Resource:

NIOSH First Aid for Heat Illness Fact Sheet: <https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/mining/UserFiles/works/pdfs/2017-128.pdf>



Safety Talks are published by NDLTAP in cooperation with the National Local Technical Assistance Association and participating partner organizations.





Safety Talk Sign-in Sheet Topic Heat Stroke and Exhaustion

Agency: _____

Crew: _____

Supervisor/Talk Leader: _____

Date: _____

Print Name

Signature

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