

Heat is a serious hazard to construction workers. Not only when workers are outdoors but also during indoor activity the body builds up heat and can struggle to get rid of extra heat.

Factors that can increase the chance of heat stress include:

- High temperature and humidity
- Not drinking enough water
- Direct sun exposure (with no shade) or extreme heat
- No breeze or wind
- Physical activity without breaks
- Use of bulky protective clothing and equipment



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Recognize the signs of these heat stress illnesses:

Heat cramps are usually experienced as muscle spasms or cramping in the stomach, arms and the back of the legs or calves.

Heat exhaustion symptoms include headaches, dizziness, weakness, wet skin, confusion, nausea, or vomiting.

Heat stroke is deadly! Recognize heat stroke symptoms which can include red, hot and dry skin, confusion, fainting, and convulsions.

Workers should follow these emergency steps:

- **Heat cramps** – drink more water and take frequent breaks, if available drink a healthy sports beverage that contains electrolytes.
- **Heat exhaustion** – 1) immediately move the affected worker from the hot area and give liquids to drink. 2) Cool the worker with cold compresses to the head, neck, and face or have the worker wash his or her head, face and neck with cold water. 3) Take the worker to a clinic or emergency room for medical evaluation and treatment.
- **Heat stroke** – if a worker is showing signs of heat stroke, especially if they stop sweating and have hot dry skin, 1) immediately call 911 or emergency services 2) move the worker to a cooler area 3) cool the worker by removing outer clothing and fanning the worker and apply wet towels or rags on their body.

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