

Summer Weather Safety

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With the dog days of summer upon us it seems appropriate to share a few tips on heat stroke and heat exhaustion. Working in extreme heat can be dangerous and even deadly. First, you need to know the signs of “Heat Exhaustion”. As the peak of summer approaches and the outside temperature increases to unbearable highs, the risk of heat exposure increases. Common signs of heat exhaustion are sweating, moist clammy skin, weakness and fatigue, nausea and or vomiting, elevated body temperature, headache and disorientation. If you or someone you know or are working with experiences signs like these, you should immediately remove the victim from the heat. Apply cool wet towels and fan the victim. However, you should stop fanning if victim develops goose bumps or shivers. If victim is conscious it is alright to give them fluids to drink. Water or sports drinks are the best in this instance.

- DO NOT give alcohol or caffeinated drinks as these actually increase dehydration.
- Do not apply ice directly to skin as these can cause cell damage and frostbite.
- Do not allow victim to become so cold that he or she shivers as this actually increases body temperature.
- Do not leave the victim alone. Seek medical attention if victim does not improve within an hour or so.

Second, you need to know the signs of “Heat Stroke”. Signs and symptoms are hot dry skin, red or spotted skin, extremely high blood pressure, mental confusion, convulsions, or loss of consciousness. If these symptoms occur get the victim in a cool bath if possible or apply cool compresses to body. Do not give fluids as they are at risk for vomiting and aspiration and seek medical attention as soon as possible.

Some safety tips to prevent injury from the extreme heat are as follows:

1. Try to schedule strenuous outdoor projects in the early morning hours when the temperatures are cooler.
2. Wear a hat and sunscreen to protect yourself from the UV rays.
3. Dress in light-weight, light-colored clothing, and shorts if possible.
4. Drink plenty of water even if you do not feel thirsty.
5. Take frequent breaks in the shade or a cool building.
6. If you have a large project, have plenty of assistance there to avoid over working yourself.
7. Avoid drinking alcohol.

Hopefully these tips will help you have a safe and productive summer.