Safety Talk: Heat Stress

Thousands of workers become sick every year from overexposure to heat. Some workers have even died from heat-related illnesses.

To protect yourself and your coworkers, it is important that you recognize the symptoms of heat-related illnesses.

**HOW TO PROTECT YOURSELF FROM HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES:**

1. Drink fluids regularly and frequently.
2. Avoid drinking alcohol, caffeine, or other diuretics.
3. Wear natural-fiber fabrics, such as cotton.
4. Avoid wearing synthetic fabrics such as nylon.
5. When working outdoors: cover skin with loose-fitting, light-colored clothes.
6. Avoid wearing hats when working indoors.
7. Take regular rest breaks in a shaded or cool area.

**RISK FACTORS FOR HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES**

**Environmental Factors:**
- Hot temperature
- High humidity
- Sunlight
- Air movement

**Personal Factors:**
- Hydration level
- Level of activity
- Type and amount of clothing worn
- Conditioning, acclimation
- Pre-existing personal conditions

**HOW TO CONTROL RISK FACTORS**

- Air conditioning
- Fans and blowers for air movement
- Block out direct sunlight
- Incorporate frequent recovery breaks
- Providing cool break areas
- Recognizing the symptoms of heat-related illnesses
- Hydration:
  - Water is best, drink water every 15 minutes
  - If you’re thirsty, then you may already be slightly dehydrated

**HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES ARE PREVENTABLE**

Do not over stress your body in hot environments

Listen to your body and stop working if you feel any symptoms of heat-related illnesses!