



## Summer Heat Safety

Summer is here and we need to think serious about working in heat and high humidity. Too much heat & humidity can make people sick & in some cases, even cause death. There are about 240 heat related deaths in the United States every year.

Normally the body cools itself by sweating. When the outside temperature is equal to or above the temperature of the body & the humidity is high, our sweat does not evaporate and the body can become overheated. Heat emergencies fall into 3 different categories:

HEAT CRAMPS cause painful spasms of the legs & stomach muscles resulting from loss of fluids & salts from sweating. Treatment is simple: massage the cramped muscles and drink fluids.

HEAT EXHAUSTION the skin will be cold, pale and clammy from perspiration. You may feel fatigue, nausea and have a headache. Treatment – move the victim to a cooler place & lay them down with their feet elevated. Have them drink small amounts of fluid at frequent intervals. Medical follow-up may be advisable.

HEAT STROKE is the most serious & potentially deadly heat emergency. Here is a malfunction in the body's regulating system resulting in lack of sweating. Heat stroke requires immediate treatment by a doctor. Symptoms include mental confusion; the victim may stagger or even lapse into unconsciousness. The skin will be dry, hot and flushed. Treatment- call an ambulance. Move the victim to a cooler place and lay them down with the head elevated. Sponge with cool water until help arrives.

Some basic things you can do to help your body handle the heat & humidity:

- Get a good nights sleep
- Eat moderately on hot days
- Wear loose fitting, lightweight clothing
- Drink plenty of cool water
- Avoid intake of alcohol, drugs, etc.

**Never ignore the symptoms of heat illness  
in yourself or a co-worker!**

