

Heat Stress



When heat is combined with other stresses such as hard physical work, loss of fluids, fatigue or pre-existing health conditions, it can disrupt your body's natural cooling system, leading to heat stress. **Heat exhaustion** is the first stage of heat stress, which may cause heavy sweating, weakness, dizziness, nausea, vomiting or panting. Left untreated, heat exhaustion may quickly develop into **heat stroke**, which is more serious and can even be fatal. Symptoms of heat stroke include hot, dry skin with no sweating, headache, confusion or a fast pulse. Seizures or unconsciousness may occur.

Heat stress can affect anyone and is a concern in many workplaces. Know the signs of heat-related illness and take necessary precautions to protect yourself:

- Drink plenty of fluids to replace perspiration. One cup of water about every 20 minutes when working in extreme heat is recommended. Avoid alcohol or caffeinated beverages as they cause your body to lose water and increase the risk of heat stress.
- Avoid working or playing in direct sunlight or during hours when the sun is at its strongest.
- Increase the number of breaks in cool or shaded areas.
- Wear light-coloured and/or lightweight clothing that permits evaporation of sweat.
- Seek medical attention immediately if you or anyone around you are/is experiencing the symptoms of heat stroke.



Use sunscreen on any skin not covered by clothing to increase your protection outside