



The Safety Zone

The Newsletter of the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust

Hot and Hazardous

How to survive a heat wave

Heat illness is a risk when temperatures rise into the 90s or higher, as they often do in August. Whether working, playing sports, or exercising, it's easy to push your body too far and suffer the consequences when it gets too hot. To see how severe the consequences can be, read the account of a real incident of heat-related death from the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and prevention:

An employee whose job involved working outdoors started his workday at 6 a.m. It was already hot, and it just got hotter. He took a short break during the morning and a lunch break mid-day. But by mid-afternoon, he was observed working slowly and seemed confused. Co-workers got him out of the heat. Around 4:30, when his condition didn't improve, he was taken by ambulance to a hospital emergency room. His core body temperature was recorded at 108 degrees, and soon after he died from heatstroke.

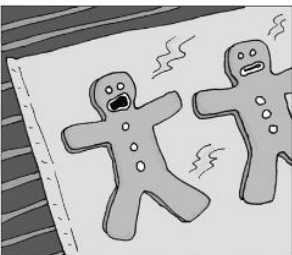
Here's a simple formula that explains the risk:

High temperature
 + High humidity
 + Physical exertion
 = Heat illness

Your individual risk depends on whether you take proper steps to prevent your body from overheating. Use this checklist to stay safe in the summer heat.

Do you:

- Dress appropriately for the heat? **Yes No**
- Slow down in a heat wave and take breaks to rest and cool down? **Yes No**
- Stay out of the sun as much as possible? **Yes No**
- Drink plenty of water all day? **Yes No**
- Take your physical condition, age, and other risk factors for heat illness into account? **Yes No**
- Watch for signs of heat stress, including fatigue, headache, dizziness, nausea, and general weakness? **Yes No**



"Oh, yeah. The heat's starting to get to me."

- Keep an eye on co-workers for symptoms of heat illness? **Yes No**
- Report any symptoms immediately to a supervisor? **Yes No**
- Know first aid for heat illness? **Yes No**

Be prepared. A few simple precautions in a heat wave can prevent illness.

news & notes

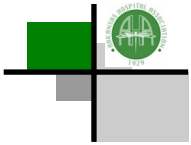
HEAT RISK FACTORS

Safety and health experts say there are several factors that increase the risk of heat stress on really hot days, including:

- Your physical condition—If you're overweight or out of shape, you may be more affected by heat.
- The kind of work you're doing—Doing heavy physical work, working around heat-producing equipment, or working out in the sun can put you in danger faster
- Heavy protective clothing that traps body heat
- Some medications that can interfere with the body's cooling system
- Your age—Older people have less body water and lower sweat gland efficiency
- Drinking a lot of caffeine
- Not drinking enough water
- Not taking enough time to get used to the heat slowly and build up endurance

Some risk factors you might not be able to change. But there are things you can do.

- Drink water steadily on hot days. Drink at least 16 ounces before physical exertion and 5 to 7 ounces every 15 or 20 minutes while physically active. Even if you're just sitting, drink plenty of water
- Wear light, loose clothing and a hat
- Work at a steady pace and try not to overexert
- Take breaks in a cool place



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No Fooling

Fooling around creates unnecessary risks

According to the dictionary "fooling around" means doing foolish, useless things. A "fool" is a person with little or no judgment or common sense. Put the two together in a safety context and you get: "Anybody who fools around on the job is a fool."

Workplace safety is serious business. Fooling around takes away your margin of safety. So when you're at work:

- Don't run
- Don't throw tools, material, PPE, beverage cans, balls, or anything else
- Don't play with sharp-edged tools
- Don't distract someone who's working with machinery or hazardous materials
- Don't play practical jokes
- Don't roughhouse or shove a co-worker
- Don't use any piece of equipment for anything but its intended purpose
- Don't let co-workers fool around—bystanders are often the ones who get hurt
- Don't accuse co-workers who take safety seriously of having "no sense of humor"

Many people who fool around on the job don't think they're doing anything dangerous. If you're one of them, now you know that you are. So DON'T!

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Got News?

Do you have news that needs to be circulated or have a subject you would like for us to address? Let us know by emailing the newsletter editor at tcreel@arkhospitals.org.

AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust Program is administered by Risk Management Resources (RMR), a division of BancorpSouth Insurance Services, Inc. www.bxsi.com. In March 2003 the AHA Workers' Compensation Self-Insured Trust was established. The program provides workers' compensation coverage to AHA members.

Risk Management Resources, the administrator for the program, assists members in the areas of claims management, safety and loss control. Tina Creel, of AHA Services, Inc., is the Group Manager of the Trust and provides oversight of the day-to-day operation of the Trust.

The Board of Trustees provides oversight of the overall operation of the Group Trust.

AHAWCSIT



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