

WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY

FP&M Safety Talk - HEAT STRESS

Date: _____

Trainer: _____

As spring arrives and summer approaches, it's once again time to alert ourselves to the signs and symptoms of heat stress. Mild heat stress symptoms include excessive sweating, muscle cramps (heat cramps) during or after work, and tiny red bumps on the skin and a prickling sensation (prickly heat). Heat stress can also cause irritability, mild dizziness, or weakness. If you experience these symptoms, you should rest in a cool area, drink water or other fluids, and place moist, warm compresses over cramping muscles or use a mild drying lotion for prickly heat.

If heat stress isn't treated when the first mild symptoms are evident, it can progress to much more serious problems like **Heat Stroke** or **Heat Exhaustion**. These are both very serious conditions. The main symptom of heat stroke is cold moist, pale skin. It is usually accompanied by nausea, headache, dizziness and a weak, rapid pulse. The main symptom of heat exhaustion is hot, dry, flushed skin. Hot red skin is usually accompanied by an irregular pulse, dizziness, confusion, and sometimes by loss of consciousness or convulsions. In the event that you or someone in your work area experiences any of these symptoms, call for medical help immediately. While you are waiting for medical help to arrive take immediate steps to cool the person down. Move the person to a cool area and keep them lying down. Remove their outer clothing and if conscious give them water or other fluids while rubbing their arms, legs, and trunk to improve circulation.

In general, it takes about a week for your body to adjust to working in hot weather. This adjustment is called the acclimatization period. As the temperature starts to rise into the 80's it is important to drink lots of water. After about a week or so your body automatically adjusts to the heat, and stops losing minerals by perspiration. If you go on vacation or and are out of the heat for more than a week or two, your body will need another week of exposure to again adjust to hot weather. Once your body is acclimatized to work in hot weather, a slight increase in the amount of salt on your food should be able to replace any minerals lost through perspiration. Heat Stress doesn't need to happen if you know how to keep you cool. So when the temperature rises:

- Drink plenty of water or other nonalcoholic fluids
- Wear proper clothing (a cotton tee shirt is better than no shirt at all).
- Use fans and ventilation provided in your work area.
- Eat wisely and lightly.
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine.
- Take appropriate breaks.
- Promptly notify you team leader or supervisor if you experience any of the heat stress symptoms discussed in this safety talk.

Protect yourself and your family from the Heat both on and off the job!

I have received this information:

Print Name	WSU ID	Initials



Facilities Planning & Management
Facilities Operations

