

Heat Illness Prevention

Guidance for Workers

Awareness of heat illness symptoms can save your life or the life of a co-worker

- If you are coming back to work from an illness or an extended break or you are just starting a job working in the heat, it is important to be aware that you are more vulnerable to heat stress until your body has time to adjust. Let your employer know you are not used to the heat. It takes about 5 – 7 days for your body to adjust.
- Drinking plenty of water frequently is vital to workers exposed to the heat. An individual may produce as much as 2 to 3 gallons of sweat per day. In order to replenish that fluid the worker should drink 3 to 4 cups of water every hour starting at the beginning of your shift.
- Taking your breaks in a cool shaded area and allowing time for recovery from the heat during the day are effective ways to avoid heat illness.
- Avoid or limit the use of alcohol and caffeine during periods of extreme heat. Both dehydrate the body.
- If you or a co-worker start to feel symptoms such as nausea, dizziness, weakness or unusual fatigue, let your supervisor know and rest in a cool shaded area. If symptoms persist or worsen seek immediate medical attention.
- Whenever possible, wear clothing that provides protection from the sun but allows airflow to the body. Protect your head and shade your eyes if working outdoors.
- When working in the heat be sure to pay extra attention to your co-workers and be sure you know how to call for medical attention.

For more information call Cal/OSHA or visit our Web site at:

www.dir.ca.gov