

# Heat-Related Illness Prevention



As temperatures begin to rise with the approaching spring and summer months, so does the risk of heat-related illnesses (HRI) for EMS providers. Common types of heat illnesses include heat exhaustion, heat cramps, heat stroke and muscle breakdown.

## Symptoms

Headache & confusion  
Profuse sweating  
Weakness & dizziness  
Rapid pulse  
Muscle cramps  
Nausea & vomiting



## Risks & Stressors

Fatigue  
Dehydration & caffeine  
Prior heat stress event  
Medications & health conditions  
Personal Protective Equipment  
Lack of Acclimation



## Steps to Prevent Heat-Related Illness



Regularly monitor for signs and symptoms of HRI before and during shift

Check the weather prior to your shift and mitigate heat stress early



Drink water and electrolyte solutions before and during your shift

Have sufficient chilled water, electrolyte drinks and ice packs on hand



Take breaks as needed to rest, cool-off and rehydrate

Look for warning signs of HRI in your teammates





# HEAT STRESS SAFETY TOOLBOX TALK

## WHAT IS HEAT STRESS?

- Body overheats: high temperatures; such as heaviness, or physical activity
- Include heat-related illnesses



## TYPES OF HEAT-RELATED ILLNESSES



### Heat Rash

Itchy, red skin



### Heat Cramps

Muscle pains or spasms



### Heat Exhaustion

Dizziness, heavy sweating



### Heat Stroke

Life-threatening: Loss of conscious confusion

## SYMPTOMS

- ✓ Dizziness
- ✓ Heavy sweating
- ✓ Weakness
- ✓ Nausea
- ✓ Headache



## EMERGENCY RESPONSE



**CALL 911!**

Cool worker down

Seek medical help

## STAY HYDRATED

- ✓ Drink water every 15 min
- ✓ Take breaks in cool areas
- ✓ Wear lightweight clothing

## EMERGENCY RESPONSE



**CALL 911!**

Cool the worker down