



**ALLEN
HOSPITAL**
IOWA HEALTH SYSTEM

Occupational Health



TAKING CARE OF
your
BUSINESS

July 2009

HOT DAYS OF SUMMER ARE HERE!!!

OSHA offers tips on working safely in hot weather

Those hot, hazy days of summer are approaching. The heat can be especially harmful for those who work outdoors in direct sunlight or in hot environments, making them susceptible to heat-induced illnesses such as heat stress, heat exhaustion or the more serious heat stroke.

"Working in extreme temperatures is not only uncomfortable, it can be life-threatening," said acting Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA Jordan Barab. "As we move into the summer months, it is important for workers and their employers to minimize the chances of heat-induced illnesses, and imperative that they recognize the signs of heat stress and take proper precautions to reduce the chances of illness or death.

High temperature and humidity, physical exertion and lack of sufficient water intake can lead to heat-related stress. Symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke include confusion, irrational behavior, loss of consciousness, abnormally high body temperature and hot, dry skin.

OSHA advises workers to take preventive measures such as reducing physical exertion and wearing light, loose-fitting clothing. The agency advises employers to provide workers with water and regular rest periods in a cool recovery area.

["Protecting Workers from the Effects of Heat"](#) and ["Working Outdoors in Warm Climates"](#) are OSHA fact sheets that explain heat stress and provide recommendations to protect workers from exposure to ultraviolet radiation. Employers and workers will find more practical tips for guarding against UV radiation in ["Protecting Yourself in the Sun,"](#) a pocket-sized card addressing various forms of skin cancer. These publications are free and can be downloaded from OSHA's Publications page at <http://www.osha.gov/pls/publications/publication.html>.

Under the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA's role is to assure safe and healthful working conditions for America's working men and women by setting and enforcing standards, and providing training, outreach and education. For more information, visit www.osha.gov.

Upcoming Events

Training Certification for Drug-Free Workplaces

2 hr. Initial Training - \$34 per person
STAY TUNED...
Upcoming class schedule on
www.allenocchealth.com

1 hr. Annual Training - \$22 per person
STAY TUNED...
Upcoming class schedule on
www.allenocchealth.com

First Aid/CPR Class

- August 14, 2009
8 - 1 p.m. Medical Staff
Classroom
(Call 235-3523 to register)

All registration information for classes can , also, be found on the lower right hand corner of our Allen Occ Health's website home page at www.allenocchealth.com.

COMMON SUMMER INJURIES AND ILLNESSES

QUICK TIPS TO AVOID INSECT BITES AND STINGS

Insects and arachnids inflicted 36,100 nonfatal occupational injuries and illnesses involving time away from work in the 1992-97 period. This was almost half of the total number of animal-related workplace injuries and illnesses. Insects can be more than just a nuisance to those who work outside—some can cause serious illnesses including Lyme disease and West Nile Virus. Here are just a few protective measures to help your employees avoid the stinging and bite so often inherent with outside work.

- Wear long-sleeved shirts; tuck pant legs into socks or boots.
- Wear foot protection. Many insects forage on the ground or in low lying foliage. Boots and shoes help keep them off you.
- Avoid wearing colognes, deodorants, or other personal hygiene products that have a strong, sweet smell as they may attract insects.
- Use insect repellent containing DEET or Picaridin.
- Get rid of sources of standing water to reduce mosquito breeding areas.

HEAT STROKE

An extremely high body temperature (above 103°F, orally)

- Red, hot and dry skin (no sweating)
- Rapid, strong pulse
- Throbbing headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Confusion
- Unconsciousness

What to do

- Call 911 for medical assistance.
- Get the victim to a shady area.
- Cool the victim rapidly using whatever methods you can (shower, hose, wet sheet).
- Monitor body temperature and continue cooling efforts until the body temperature drops to 101-102°F. Do not give the victim fluids to drink.
- If a victim's muscles begin to twitch uncontrollably, keep the victim from injuring himself, but do not place any object in the mouth and do not give fluids.
- If there is vomiting, turn the victim on his or her side.

HEAT EXHAUSTION

- Heavy sweating
- Paleness
- Muscle cramps
- Tiredness
- Weakness
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fainting

What to do

- Seek medical attention immediately if symptoms are severe or if victim has heart problems or high blood pressure.
- Otherwise, help the victim to cool off, and seek medical attention if symptoms worsen or last longer than one hour.

HEAT RASH

- Red cluster of pimples or small blisters on the neck and upper chest, in the groin, under the breasts and in elbow creases.

What to do

- Provide a cooler, less humid environment.
- Keep the affected area dry. Dusting powder may be used, but avoid using ointments or creams.

HEAT CRAMPS

- Muscle pains or spasms – usually in the abdomen, arms, or legs – that may occur in association with strenuous activity.

What to do

- Stop all activity and sit quietly in a cool place.
- Drink clear juice or a sports beverage.
- Do not return to strenuous activity
- for a few hours after the cramps subside, because further exertion may lead to heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

Seek medical attention for heat cramps if the cramps do not subside in one hour.