

Prevention of Heat-Stress Disorders

Who Should Be Especially Careful

- People just starting a job involving physical work in a hot environment
- Older people, who become less able to do strenuous physical work in the heat
- People who are ill, overweight, physically unfit, or on medication that can cause dehydration
- People who have been drinking alcohol
- **Those who have had a previous heat stress disorder**

About Heat Stress Disorders

Heat stress disorders range from mild disorders such as fainting, cramps, or prickly heat to more dangerous disorders such as heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

- Symptoms of *heat stress* can include: sweating, clammy skin, fatigue, decreased strength, loss of coordination and muscle control, dizziness, nausea, and irritability.
- Symptoms of *heat stroke* may include: hot skin, no sweating, high temperature (104 or more), delirious behavior, loss of consciousness - coma.

In the case of heat stroke, call for medical help immediately – 911 !

Prevention of Heat Disorders

- Acclimatize your body to the heat. Gradually increase the time you spend in the heat. Most people acclimatize to warmer temperatures in 7-10 days. Acclimatization is lost when you have been away from the heat for one week or more. When you return, you must repeat the acclimatization process.
- Drink at least 4-8 ounces of fluid every 20 – 30 minutes to maintain proper balance during hot and/or humid environments.
- During prolonged heat exposure or heavy workload, a carbohydrate-electrolyte beverage [sports drink] can be very beneficial.
- Alternate work and rest cycles to prevent an overexposure to heat. Rest cycles should include relocation to a cooler environment.