

## Working Safely in Summer Heat

We are entering the season when OSHA wants employers to pay close attention to heat related illnesses. Managers and supervisors should know the symptoms and take quick action when heat related problems occur. OSHA gives the following tip for workers and employers:

- 1. Drink cool water.** Someone working in a hot environment should drink cool water in small amounts frequently—one cup every 20 minutes. Employers should make water available. Avoid alcohol, coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks, which cause dehydration.
- 2. Dress appropriately.** Wear lightweight, loose-fitting clothing and change clothing if it becomes completely saturated. Use sunscreen and wear a hat when working outdoors.
- 3. Work less, rest more.** Supervisors should assign a lighter workload and longer rest periods during days of intense heat. Short, frequent work/rest cycles are best. Schedule heavy work for cooler parts of the day.
- 4. Work in ventilated areas.** All workplaces should have good general ventilation, as well as spot cooling in work areas of high heat production. Good air flow increases evaporation of sweat, which cools the skin.
- 5. Ask workers how they are feeling.** Supervisors should monitor workplace temperature and humidity and check workers' responses to heat at least hourly. Allow a large margin of safety, be alert to early signs of heat-related illness, and allow workers to stop for a rest break if they become uncomfortable.
- 6. Know the signs and take prompt action.** Employees and employers should learn to spot the signs of heat stroke, which can be fatal. Get emergency medical attention immediately if someone exhibits confusion, loss of consciousness, flushed face, hot and dry skin, or has stopped sweating.
- 7. Train first aid workers.** First aid workers should be able to recognize and treat the signs of heat stress, heat exhaustion, heat cramps and other heat-related illness. Be sure all workers know who is trained to give first aid.
- 8. Reduce work for anyone at risk.** Employers should use common sense when determining fitness for work in hot environments. Lack of acclimatization, age, obesity, poor conditioning, pregnancy, inadequate rest, previous heat injuries, certain medical conditions and medications are some factors that increase someone's susceptibility to heat stress.
- 9. Check with your doctor.** Certain medical conditions, such as heart conditions and diabetes, and some medication can increase the risk of injury from heat exposure. Employees who have medical conditions or take medications should ask their doctors before working in hot environments.
- 10. Watch out for other hazards.** Use common sense and monitor other environmental hazards that often accompany hot weather, such as smog and ozone.

The three categories of heat illness are: heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke. Of the three the most dangerous is heat stroke as it is a life-threatening illness. It occurs when the body has exhausted its supply of water and salt, and the body temperature rises dangerously. It can be mistaken for a heart attack, so co-workers must be able to recognize its symptoms: elevated body temperature, no sweating, dry skin that is red or flushed, rapid pulse, breathing difficulty, high blood pressure, and possibly the dizziness, headache, nausea, and confusion associated with heat exhaustion. Be careful and safe this summer.

(Source: Occupational Health and Safety: Fred Elliott)

## What is a Treatment Plan?

When you send an injured worker to HealthFirst Medical, how does the provider decide upon a treatment plan for the patient?

The provider will take an appropriate medical history, conduct a physical examination and order appropriate tests to determine a diagnosis. Once a diagnosis is made, the provider will follow the American College of Occupational and Environmental Medicine (ACOEM) guideline for treatment. These guidelines have been accepted by the DWC as the standard for treatment. The guidelines have an estimated timeline for recovery for specific work injuries. If physical therapy is required the number of visits are controlled by the guidelines. The provider can give you an estimate of the length of time it will take for your worker to make a complete recovery, but there are unique individual factors that come into play. A patient's physical condition, age, medical history and attitude can effect the rate at which they will heal. An older worker will take longer to recover from the same injury as someone who is in their twenties and a person who is physically fit will tend to heal faster than someone in poor physical shape.

It is the goal of HealthFirst Medical to help your injured worker recovery completely and return to full duty as quickly as possible. We feel that is very important for the worker to continue on modified work if medically possible. It has been proven that workers on modified duty return to full duty faster than someone who is taken off of work.



**MEDICAL GROUP, Inc.**

13440 E. Imperial Hwy.  
Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670

## Frequently Asked Questions

### What is a stroke?

A stroke occurs either when the blood supply to part of the brain is blocked or when a blood vessel in the brain bursts. Brain cells that do not get oxygen become injured and die. Death or permanent disability can result.

### What are the symptoms of stroke?

The National Institute of Neurological Disorders and Stroke notes these major signs of stroke:

- Sudden numbness or weakness of the face, arms, or legs
- Sudden confusion or trouble speaking or understanding others
- Sudden trouble seeing in one or both eyes
- Sudden trouble walking, dizziness, or loss of balance or coordination
- Sudden severe headache with no known cause

All of the major symptoms of stroke appear suddenly, and often there is more than one symptom at the same time.

(Source: CDC)

### Changes in Company Information?

Company Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Insurance Carrier: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Other: \_\_\_\_\_