

# CONTROLLING HEAT STRESS

**1. ACCLIMATIZATION.** Get used to hot working environments gradually. US Army studies indicate 10 days necessary for full adjustment.

Work/rest cycles. Slowed work pace.

**2. LIQUID INTAKE.** Drink lots of cool (not ice cold) water, along with salted beverages (“sport beverages”--Gatorade, Powerade, etc.) Use adequate salt at meals. In some cases, thirst is not an accurate indication of body’s need for liquids. Avoid alcoholic beverages. (consult with physician if you’re on a restricted salt or low-sodium diet)

**3. MOVEMENT.** Try not to stand immobile in one spot for extended periods. Wide-open surface capillaries (blood vessels) can pool blood in legs, causing temporary low blood pressure & black-outs. Movement helps prevent blood pooling.

**4. CLOTHES CHANGE.** Especially in very humid environments, sweat doesn’t evaporate readily, soaks clothes, and can result in prickly heat, or heat rashes. Bathe daily, and consider a complete change of clothes at mid-day (lunch break), during especially humid times.

**5. ADJUST WORK / REST CYCLES.**--The hotter and more humid the environment, rest breaks should be taken more frequently, and for longer periods of time.

**6. PROVIDE COOLING.** During rest breaks, and meal breaks, cool areas should be provided. Frigid air conditioning should be avoided, if possible. Fans in the work area help move air, and evaporate sweat. Refuges from heat and humidity should be provided at the workplace, so workers who are feeling ill effects from heat can recuperate.

**7. IF YOU FEEL BAD, STOP WORKING .** Continuing to work with a developing heat disorder can lead to a serious medical emergency. Stop working and notify your supervisor if you feel nauseated, light-headed, dizzy, excessively weak, or have similar symptoms. Seek a cool place to lie down and rest.