

HEAT ILLNESS GUIDE

FOR CWU MEMBERS

KEY FACT: HEAT ILLNESS HAPPENS IN THE UK AS WELL AS IN WARM CLIMATES.

Heat illness or heat related injury can cause a lot of damage and in some cases heat illness can be fatal.

DEFINITION OF HEAT ILLNESS

Heat Illness refers to a spectrum of disorders caused by environmental conditions whereby individuals become quickly unwell because of a rise in core body temperature.

HOW DOES IT HAPPEN?

- 1 Heat illness happens when a body gains more heat than it loses.
- 2 Our body temperature rises when working or exercising or undertaking any manual activity during any increase air temperature, or when in direct sunshine or where heat amplification occurs by reflecting off buildings and other surfaces. Heat amplification can often occur in vehicles too.
- 3 Heat is normally lost mainly by sweating. Usually, this helps the body to cool down and continue to function efficiently. In humid conditions, sweating doesn't work as well, and if too many clothes (or the wrong sort of clothes) are worn the body may keep in more heat than it should.
- 4 If more heat is gained than lost, our body temperature rises too much, which may lead to heat illness. HEAT STORAGE = HEAT GAINED – HEAT LOST
- 5 Risk Factors You are at greater risk of heat illness if you are: • Tired • Hungry • Thirsty (dehydrated) • Or if identified as a Vulnerable person due to another health condition.
- 6 An individual should be presumed to have heat illness if they experience or display any of the following: • Agitation • Nausea or vomiting • Cramps • Dizziness.
- 7 Worsening Signs of heat illness includes staggering, loss of coordination, collapse, loss of consciousness.
- 8 Where Heat Illness signs exist, STOP activity and seek medical assistance.

RISK BEHAVIOURS TO AVOID

DO NOT ignore any warning signs, if you or someone else you know or are working with start to display early signs of heat injury or heat illness you can call 111 to seek immediate guidance and advice or immediately call 999 if urgent First Aid is required.

DO NOT restrict water intake, even if you have limited access to toilet facilities you should still drink enough water to stay hydrated and return to work to use the toilet as required. Dehydration can be mild, moderate or severe depending on how much water your body is lacking, an early symptom to look out for is thirst.

DO NOT directly seek the sun, this is dangerous especially during physical work activity, seeking shade wherever possible can reduce how hot a person feels by more than 10 °C

FURTHER GUIDANCE CAN BE FOUND BY SCANNING THE QR CODES BELOW:

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