

H&S Alert Bulletin: Hot Weather

Most of us enjoy sunny weather, but extreme heat can seriously damage your health. During a heat wave it is important to know the risks and how to stay safe and cool!

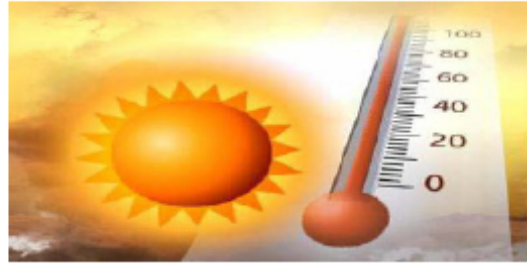
What are the risks?

In a severe heat wave you may get dehydrated and your body may overheat. It can cause heat exhaustion or heatstroke.

What are the symptoms of heat exhaustion?

Symptoms include:-

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Muscle weakness or cramps
- Pale skin
- High temperature



What are the symptoms of heatstroke?

Heatstroke can develop if heat exhaustion is left untreated and can be fatal. Symptoms include headaches, nausea, and thirst, a sudden rise in temperature, confusion, convulsions and loss of consciousness. If you have any of these symptoms, it is important to seek medical advice immediately.

Tips to keep cool and reduce the risk of ill health from the heat!

- Drink lots of water to avoid dehydration. When working outside in hot weather try and drink 1 pint of water every hour. Avoid tea and coffee as these can dehydrate you.
- If working outside, spend your breaks out of the sun. Do not forget to use Factor 15+ sunscreen and apply regularly.
- Wherever possible, switch off heat emitting equipment, e.g. lights, computers when not in use.
- When you go outside try and stay in the shade as much as possible. Wear a hat and light, loose-fitting clothes, preferably cotton. When working outdoors, keep covered up by wearing the lightweight issued PPE.
- Keep windows closed while the room is cooler than it is outside. Open them when the temperature inside rises, and at night for ventilation. During the day keep blinds/curtains drawn.
- Try to eat more cold food, particularly salads and fruit, which contain water.

Contact your GP or pharmacist if you are worried about your health during a heat wave.

For more information, visit www.nhsdirect.nhs.uk