



# Safety Gram

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## Heat Stress

Well, it's here—triple digit temperatures! Whether you're climbing Squaw Peak, doing some yard work or playing ball, there are some precautions you should take to protect yourselves and your families from heat exposure.

There are three main illnesses related to heat exposure: heat stroke, heat exhaustion and heat cramps. Because they require different treatments, you should learn to tell the difference between them.

A victim of heat stroke experiences flushed, dry skin: a rapid heartbeat; loud, rapid breathing; and a high body temperature—usually 105 degrees Fahrenheit or more. The victim may complain of dizziness and headache or may suffer from confusion, convulsions, delirium, or unconsciousness. **This is a medical emergency requiring quick action.** While one person calls for emergency medical personnel, others should get the victim cooled off. Place the victim in a tub of cool water or use a hose or wet cloths to bring the temperature down. Massage the victim's hands and feet toward the heart to stimulate circulation of the cooler blood of the limbs. Dry the victim off when the temperature returns to normal. Repeat the cooling process if the body temperature again rises.

A victim of heat exhaustion appears very different from a heat stroke victim. This person sweats profusely and has pale, clammy skin. The body temperature is normal. The person may feel giddy or nervous, or may be nauseous. First aid for heat exhaustion is to get the victim to lie down in a cool place and to sip cool water. Apply cool, wet cloths

and loosen the clothing. If the condition does not improve, seek medical attention.

Heat cramps are painful spasms in the arms, legs or abdomen. This is caused by a loss of body salts due to excessive sweating. Have the person sit or lie down in the shade while sipping cool water. Massaging the cramped muscles or pressing firmly on them with your hands can relieve the cramps.

Heat-related illnesses can be avoided. Here's what to do to keep healthy in hot weather.

**Take it easy.** Allow your body time to adjust to working in the heat.

**Drink plenty of water.** Don't wait until you're thirsty. By that time, you may be experiencing dehydration. Drink at least eight ounces every 30 minutes while working outside. Avoid alcoholic beverages. They will only accelerate the dehydration process.

**Eat right and eat light.** Avoid hot heavy meals. Fresh fruits and vegetables are good alternatives since they are high in water content and contain vitamins and minerals lost through perspiration.

**Dress sensibly.** Wear light-colored clothing that lets your skin breathe. Wear a cap or wide-brimmed hat to shield your head and face when you're outside.

**Give yourself a break.** Plan breaks out of the sun to allow your body to cool off.

Please remember...any form of heat exposure can be a serious threat to your health and safety. Don't ignore the danger signs.



Employee Acknowledgment of Safety Information.

**Sign below:**

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Supervisor's Signature

Date Circulated or Meeting Date

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