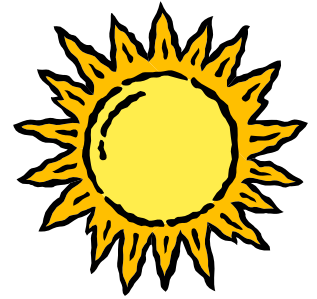


Beat the Heat: Preventing Heat Illness



As the summer season approaches it is important for Garden and Arboretum staff to be aware of heat related illnesses. Many of your employees will be outside for several hours at a time; the days with excessive heat and humidity can place abnormal stress on your body. Coupled with hard work it can create heat cramps, heat exhaustion or heat stroke.

What are the types and symptoms of heat illness?

- **Heat Cramps**
 - Symptoms: Severe muscle spasms in the back, stomach, arms, and legs, attributed to the loss of body salt and water during periods of heavy perspiration.
 - First-Aid: Move the victim to a cooler area and allow them to drink approximately six ounces of water every 15 minutes. Follow up with a medical examination.
- **Heat Exhaustion**
 - Symptoms: Heavy sweating, fainting, red complexion, cool pale skin, nausea, headache, weakness, vomiting, rapid pulse/heartrate, and normal temperature (often occurs when perspiration evaporates too slowly to properly cool the body).
 - First Aid: Move the victim to a cooler area, keep them lying down with legs slightly elevated. Cool their body by fanning and applying cool, wet towels, and allow a conscious victim to drink approximately six ounces of water every 15 minutes. Follow up with a medical examination.
- **Heat Stroke**
 - Symptoms: High body temperature, red and often dry skin, rapid breathing and pulse, headache, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, seizures, and the victim may be disorganized, confused or unconscious.
 - First Aid: Heat stroke is life threatening. Move fast! If present, instruct a bystander to call an ambulance, move the victim to cooler area, remove outer clothing and immerse the victim in cool water or apply cool, wet towels or cloths to the body, give no liquid, treat for shock until professional help arrives.

Educate staff to recognize the symptoms of heat illness and how to appropriately administer first aid. Employees and volunteers can prevent heat illness and “beat the heat” by taking precautionary measures when working out of doors.



How can you “beat the heat”?



- Wear loose, light colored clothing and a hat
- Adapt to working in hot conditions gradually, take it easy the first week
 - If possible, void over-exertion during peak temperature periods
- Drink water frequently and moderately
 - Add lemon to your water
 - Stay away from liquids containing alcohol or caffeine, they tend to increase urination causing rapid depletion of body liquids
- Eat light meals

SAFETY REMINDER: THE RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS INCREASES WITH AGE, POOR DIET, INSUFFICIENT LIQUID INTAKE, POOR PHYSICAL CONDITION, & WHEN TAKING MEDICATION. NEVER TAKE SALT TABLETS WITHOUT YOUR DOCTOR’S APPROVAL.

For a copy of this information in an easy-to-read form for your employees, contact Sharon VanLoon at Berends Hendricks Stuit Insurance Agency, 800-350-7676.



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