

Heat-related illnesses are common occurrences in our brutally hot, humid Texas summers and come in various forms, including minor inconveniences, such as a sunburn or rash, but can progress into something much more significant, such as a heat stroke. Severe heat illnesses occur when the body cannot get rid of excess heat, causing core temperatures to rise and the heart rate to increase. Heat and dehydration can also affect concentration, making employees more prone to accidents. With proper education and preparation, heat-related illnesses and deaths are preventable.

**1**

**Signs and Symptoms of Heat Illness:** May include dizziness, headaches, fatigue, and muscle cramping. Affected individuals may appear weak, confused, or nauseated, and their skin may feel damp, pale, or clammy. Vomiting or disorientation are signs the condition is becoming more serious and requires immediate attention.



**2**

**Personal Risk Factors:** These include lifestyle habits such as frequent caffeine or alcohol consumption, and low fitness levels. Body size also plays a role, as excess weight can make it harder for the body to regulate temperature. Age and health conditions like heart disease, diabetes, or history of heat-related illness can increase the risk of heat stress.



**3**

**Hydration and Nutrition Tips:** Staying hydrated is one of the most effective ways to prevent heat illnesses. Drink water frequently. Avoid energy drinks or sugary sodas, and fuel your body with light, balanced meals that support energy and hydration. Adding electrolyte-rich drinks can also help replace minerals lost through sweat during prolonged work in the heat.



**4**

**Training Employees for the Texas Heat:** Preparing employees for extreme heat starts with training on recognizing symptoms, understanding personal risk factors, and knowing how to respond to heat-related emergencies. Regular refreshers and tailgate talks help reinforce safety practices as temperatures rise throughout the Texas summer.

**5**

**Emergency Response and First Aid:** If someone shows signs of heat illness, quick action can prevent heat exhaustion from progressing into life-threatening heat stroke. Call 911, move them to a cool, shaded area and provide water if they are conscious and able to drink.

#### LEARN MORE WITH THESE ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- CDC [Heat and Your Health](#).
- Department of Health Services [Heat Stress Resources](#)
- Texas Department of Insurance: [Heat Stress Safety Training Program](#)
- National Weather Service [Heat Cramps, Exhaustion, Stroke](#)