

THE

CONNECTION

July 2008

The Three Faces Of Heat Stress

Heat - whether from the sun or from your work environment - can create a life - threatening emergency. Heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heat stroke are the three main types of illness which result from too much heat.

Heat cramps are painful but not life - threatening: They most often occur in the leg and stomach muscles, and are caused by an imbalance of water and salt in the body. Usually the person has been sweating a great deal for a short period and possibly drinking water to replace the fluids, but not replacing the salt. Drinking a solution of one teaspoon of salt per pint of water will ease the cramps. A rest and a lightly salted snack will also help. Do not ignore heat cramps.

Heat exhaustion is more serious: It can be caused by either too little water or too little salt. The first symptoms are dizziness, sweating, headache, weakness, tiredness and nausea. If the person continues to lose water, this condition can become similar to shock which can result in reduced mental alertness, blurred vision, pale and wet skin and shallow rapid breathing.

If someone is suffering from heat exhaustion:

*Move the person to a cooler place.

*Loosen restrictive clothing.

*If the victim is conscious, have him drink a solution of one teaspoon of salt per pint of water.

*Lay the victim down.

*Raise the person's feet and legs slightly higher than his head.

*Fan the victim.

*Call for medical help.

Heat stroke is serious: Heat stroke is a life-threatening medical emergency. The body has lost its ability to sweat and the inner temperature has risen dangerously. The victim will complain of thirst, blurred vision, dizziness, headache, and nausea. These symptoms are similar to heat exhaustion but the skin will be hot and dry, and breathing will be deep and fast as if the victim has been running. He or she might complain that their muscles feel as if they are on fire. The person may collapse with little or no warning.

If someone is suffering from heat stroke:

*Call for medical assistance immediately.

*If the person is not breathing and you are properly trained, begin rescue breathing procedures.

*It is important to lower the inner body temperature rapidly because damage to the brain, kidneys and heart can occur. Remove the person's clothing and cover with a wet blanket or spray gently with water. Fan the person to increase heat loss.

These tips can help prevent heat stress in any form:

*Drink plenty of water or one of the commercially prepared drinks designed to replace fluids and minerals.

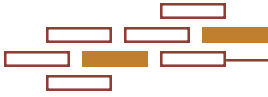
*Don't drink coffee, tea or cola to replace water.

*Take short rest breaks in a cooler area.

*Eat light, cool meals.

*Dress lightly, in layers, so that you can adjust as the temperature changes.

*Heat illness can be serious-even fatal. Take it easy when you work in hot conditions!



Joint Protection

Correct "body mechanics" help you move with minimal strain. A physical or occupational therapist can suggest techniques and equipment that protect your joints while decreasing stress and conserving energy.

Modifications you can make include:

- Avoid grasping actions that strain your finger joints. Don't twist or use your joints forcefully.
- Spread the weight of an object over several joints.
- Take a break periodically to relax and stretch.
- Poor posture causes uneven weight distribution and may strain ligaments and muscles.
- Throughout the day, use your strongest muscles, and favor large joints. Don't push open a heavy door. Lean into it. To pick up an object, bend your knees and squat while keeping your back straight.

We welcome your comments and suggestions about the Connection. To submit articles and/or topic ideas, please call: (269) 629-9708 or send to P.O. Box 460, Richland, MI 49083. Also visit our website at: www.CLS-Skilledlabor.com

No SUBSTITUTE FOR SAFETY

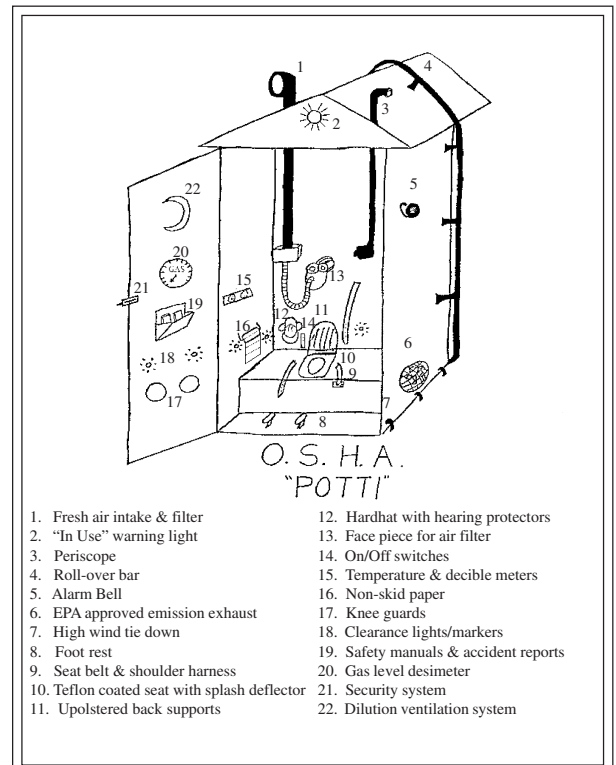
It happens all the time. You need to get something done, and the tool or equipment isn't available. This is where a little creativity with substitutes can save you time and energy - or it can get you into big trouble. Before you use a "make-do," stop and think. Is the substitute really going to save you that much time? Is it really a safe replacement for the right piece of equipment?

For instance, on a construction site, a favorite substitute for almost anything is a cinder block. You can always depend on cinder blocks - to break at the wrong time. Everyone has a story about cinder blocks. There was the pipefitter who was trying to set up a scaffold in a stairway. Cinder blocks under two legs of the scaffold made it fit perfectly. The scaffold was just right - until one of the cinder blocks shattered and dumped him and the scaffold down the stairs. Putting cinder blocks under heavy equipment is an invitation to crushed toes when the blocks give way. Cinder blocks may make great bookshelves, but you can't trust them on the job.

Need another scaffold plank? Resist the impulse to visit the scrap lumber pile or use lumber intended for another purpose. Scaffold planks should meet strict specifications and be tested before they are used.

You use many tools in the course of your work day. It's your job to know which tool is right for which task. Always take the time to properly set up and use tools the way they were intended, even if it means setting up a special tool for a small job. And the same goes for protective equipment. Use the right eye protection or on loan from your buddy. If you work around loud noise, cotton wads or other materials are no substitute for approved earplugs or earmuffs.

Most of the time the best rule for substitutes is to stay away from them. If you want to be creative, take an art class in your spare time. But if you must use a substitute, a good rule to follow is to make sure it's stronger and safer than whatever it's replacing.



- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| 1. Fresh air intake & filter | 12. Hardhat with hearing protectors |
| 2. "In Use" warning light | 13. Face piece for air filter |
| 3. Periscope | 14. On/Off switches |
| 4. Roll-over bar | 15. Temperature & decibel meters |
| 5. Alarm Bell | 16. Non-skid paper |
| 6. EPA approved emission exhaust | 17. Knee guards |
| 7. High wind tie down | 18. Clearance lights/markers |
| 8. Foot rest | 19. Safety manuals & accident reports |
| 9. Seat belt & shoulder harness | 20. Gas level desimeter |
| 10. Teflon coated seat with splash deflector | 21. Security system |
| 11. Upholstered back supports | 22. Dilution ventilation system |