

MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM

"Heat Illness Prevention Tips"

The topic of heat illness has received a great deal of attention following last year tragic events of athletes in hot climate. Heat illness can happen to anyone in a hot environment and is an issue for MCLB Albany personnel, especially those who conduct outside activities. Base personnel need to be aware of warning signs and how to prevent heat illnesses. Below are some tips to help prevent heat illnesses during heat stress conditions.

1. Know the Warning Signs of Heat Illness

- **Heat Syncope** – is fainting as a result of overheating. It occurs when blood pressure is lowered as the body dilates arterioles in the skin to radiate heat. Also, water is evaporated from the blood, reducing the blood's volume and therefore lowering blood pressure further. The result is less blood to the brain, causing light-headedness and fainting.
- **Heat Cramps** – affects muscles such as those in the arms, legs and abdomen – the muscles which have been used while working. These cramps may occur after work, when the person is resting. Heat cramps are a signal that the body has lost too much salt through sweating.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – is a serious condition that needs immediate attention. It may have any or all of these symptoms: A feeling of exhaustion, nausea, dizziness, pale and clammy skin, quick pulse, and low blood pressure. Heat stroke may follow if heat exhaustion is not treated.
- **Heat Stroke** – is a serious matter and it can be fatal. It occurs when the body's heat control mechanism simply shuts down. Perspiration stops and the body temperature rise. The heart pounds and the skin become flushed and hot. This condition is a medical emergency and must be treated immediately.

2. Take Action to Prevent Heat Illness

- **Get used to working in the heat gradually.** For example, if the weather suddenly turns hot or you are transferred to a hot environment, take it easy until you are accustomed or acclimated to the temperature.
- **Drink water often to avoid dehydration.** The body loses water through perspiration, so you need to replenish it frequently. Stay away from alcoholic beverages or caffeinated beverages because they will cause you to lose even more water and salt.
- **Take frequent rest breaks when working in heat stress conditions.** These breaks can consist of moving to a cooler area or switching to lighter work.
- **Dress appropriate for the heat stress conditions.** Dress lightly, in layers so that you can subtract or add clothing as the temperature changes. Be sure to shade the skin against the sun.



3. Monitor MCLB Albany Current Heat Flag Condition



You can access the [current heat flag condition](#) by any of the following methods:

- Computer internet access
- Smartphones
- Heat flags displayed at various location at MCLB Albany
- Call Risk Management via phone



For additional information on Heat Illness Prevention, visit <http://www.osha.gov/SLTC/heatillness/>



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