

Safety meeting blueprint

✓ **Meeting Topic:** Heat stress

✓ **Today's Date:** _____

✓ **Attendee Signatures:**

While some of us might think we're too young and healthy to be affected by high temperatures, the unfortunate reality is that everyone is at risk for heat stress.

And heat stress can lead to illnesses such as heat stroke, heat exhaustion, expanded blood vessels (heat edema), heat rash, heat cramps and fainting (heat syncope).

That's why it's important to stay safe in the heat, even if you're young and healthy.

Hydrate often

The young and healthy misconception is one myth about heat stress. But it's not the only one. Another heat stress fallacy is that you need to drink water only when you're thirsty.

However, the truth is that you should hydrate as often as possible, even if you're not thirsty. Consider that most heat disorders are caused by dehydration, so staying hydrated is the best way to head off heat stress.

Plus, if you wait until you're thirsty to drink water, you may have already lost 2% of your body's water. Keep in mind that it only takes about 3% of body water loss for someone to suffer heat stress.

To stay hydrated, drink at least one cup of water every 15 minutes. Or use the half-half rule: Drink one-half liter of water every half hour.

(Can anyone think of any other heat-stress safety myths?)

Here's another misconception about heat stress: Drinking any liquid can prevent dehydration. In fact, alcohol and caffeine cause dehydration, which can worsen the symptoms of heat stress.

You shouldn't drink caffeine or alcohol before and during work. Instead, consume water or sports drinks that are designed to replace fluids.

Healthy salt intake

Some people falsely believe that consuming salt tablets can be a good way

to replace minerals lost through sweat. In reality, salt tablets can make heat stress worse.

If you want to restore minerals lost from sweat, try a healthier way to add salt to your diet. Choose salty foods with potassium or fruits like bananas and oranges.

Environmental factors

Some people also think that you can only suffer heat stress if you're working outdoors. But that's not true. Even if you're laboring inside, you're still at risk for heat stress. Don't be fooled; you still have to follow sensible heat stress safety procedures when you're working indoors.

Consider that the conditions that often lead to heat stress can also be present indoors. These include high temperatures, high humidity levels and the absence of air movement.

Thanks for your attention. And remember, let's stay safe out there!

(See next page for test)

Safety meeting blueprint: Test your knowledge

Meeting Topic: Heat stress

1. What's the half-half rule?

- a. Drink one-half liter of soda every half hour
- b. Drink one-half liter of an energy drink every half hour
- c. Drink one-half liter of alcohol every half hour
- d. Drink one-half liter of water every half hour

2. The best way to protect against heat stress is to consume salt tablets that can replace minerals lost through sweat. True or False?

3. Many heat disorders are caused by which of the following?

- a. Cold temperatures
- b. Dehydration
- c. Overhydration
- d. None of the above

4. One environmental factor that often leads to heat stress is

- a. Low temperatures
- b. Low humidity levels
- c. An absence of air movement
- d. All of the above

5. What percentage of your body's water may have been lost if you wait until you're thirsty to drink water?

- a. 2%
- b. 10%
- c. 20%
- d. 30%

6. Which of the following can worsen the symptoms of heat stress?

- a. Sports drinks
- b. Water
- c. Alcohol

- d. All of the above

7. Heat stress can lead to illnesses such as

- a. Heat stroke
- b. Heat exhaustion
- c. Heat cramps
- d. All of the above

8. What's the best way to head off heat stress?

- a. Consume sugary foods
- b. Stay hydrated
- c. Wear leather clothing
- d. None of the above

9. To prevent heat stress, how often should you drink water?

- a. As often as possible
- b. Every two hours
- c. Only when you're thirsty
- d. Never

10. You still have to follow

heat stress safety procedures when you're working indoors. True or False?

11. How much body water loss does it take for someone to suffer heat stress?

- a. 0.5%
- b. 3%
- c. 10%
- d. 15%

12. To stay hydrated, drink one cup of water every

- a. 15 minutes
- b. 30 minutes
- c. 45 minutes
- d. Two hours

13. As long as you're young, you won't be affected by heat stress. True or False?

Test your knowledge: The answers

- 1. d
- 2. False. Salt tablets can worsen heat stress. Instead, adopt a healthier approach to add salt to your diet, such as eating fruits with potassium.
- 3. b
- 4. c
- 5. a
- 6. c
- 7. d
- 8. b
- 9. a
- 10. True. You don't have to be working outside to be harmed by the heat. The conditions that lead to heat stress may be present inside too.
- 11. b
- 12. a
- 13. False. Despite what some people might think, anyone can be at risk for heat stress.