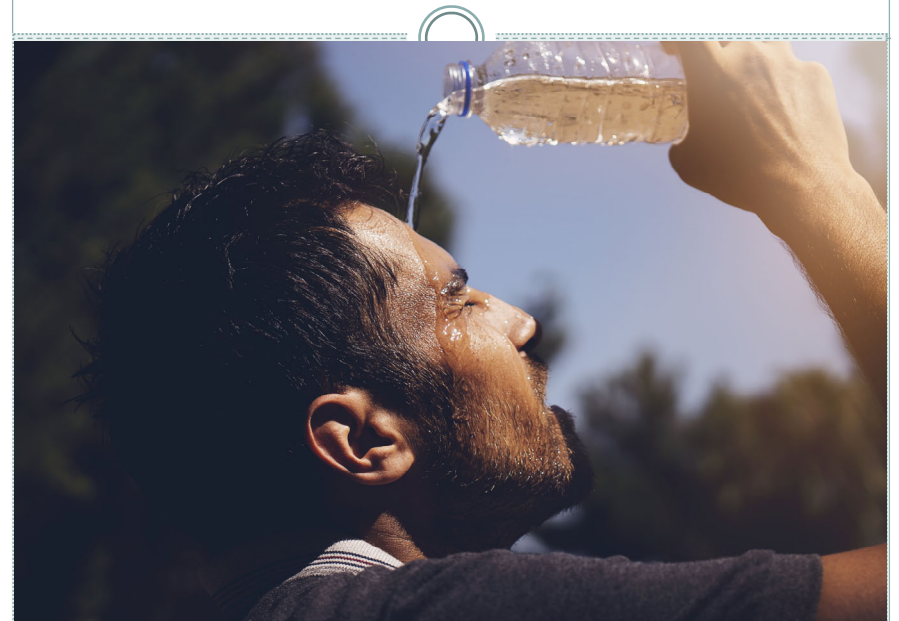




This material was produced under Grant Number SH-39124-SH2 from the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, U.S. Department of Labor. It does not necessarily reflect the views or policies of the U.S. Department of Labor, nor does mention of trade names, commercial products, or organizations imply endorsement by the U.S. Government.



Preventing and responding to heat illness



Farmworker Justice
Justicia Campesina

www.farmworkerjustice.org

December 2022



Preventing and responding to heat illness

Farmworkers can suffer heat illness while working hard under high temperatures and humidity. To prevent this:

- Drink plenty of cold water (at least four cups per hour). You don't have to drink it all at once.
- Take short breaks and go into the shade.
- Use loose cotton clothing.
- Do the heaviest tasks during the coolest hours of the day.
- Avoid alcohol or caffeinated beverages.
- Keep an eye on your coworkers for any signs of heat illness.

The symptoms of heat illness include:

- Headaches
- Dizziness
- Irritability
- Thirst
- Nausea
- Heavy sweating
- Weakness
- Elevated body temperature

If you have these symptoms, rest, move to the shade, drink a lot of water, and refresh yourself.

If you don't treat these symptoms immediately, heat stroke can occur, which is much more serious. The symptoms of heat stroke include:

- Hot skin
- Slurred speech
- Confusion/inability to think clearly
- Convulsions/seizures
- Collapsing
- Loss of consciousness/fainting

What to do in case of heat stroke

In case of heat stroke, someone must **call 911** for an ambulance. **This is a medical emergency.** Move the victim to a shaded area and try to cool their body – loosen and remove heavy clothing. If they are conscious and able to drink, make sure that the person drinks cold fluids. Never give anything to drink to an unconscious person. Put cold, damp towels or ice packs over their body, especially on the head, neck, trunk, armpits, and groin.

If you are not sure if the person has heat stroke, call an ambulance and treat them as if they are suffering from heat stroke, following the instructions above. This could save their life.