Australian National University

Work Environment Group **Number 10** **(10/02/2017)**

Safety Awareness
Heat Stress!

Back Ground:

Heat Stress occurs when the body cannot sufficiently cool itself. Factors that contribute to this include: temperature, humidity, amount of air movement, radiant temperature of surroundings, clothing and physical activity.

Symptoms of heat stress can include headaches, dizziness, nausea and even muscle or abdominal cramps.

Is there a risk of heat illness?

If there is a risk of heat illness at work, it must be controlled. Advice may be sought from your local area Safety Officer or Health and Safety Representative (HSR). They can provide recommendations about how the risk can assessed and controlled. Adjustments are also made to take into account things such as physical workload, clothing and work organization. People who work in office type environments and who do very little physical work are unlikely to be at risk of suffering heat illness. What they experience as a result of higher temperature and increased humidity, is likely to be heat discomfort.

Recommendations:

- Avoid hot processes, or reschedule work so hot tasks may be performed in the cooler part of day;
- Allowing workers to acclimatize, with adequate breaks;
- Avoid spending long periods of time in the sun without taking the proper precautions;
- Stay hydrated, drink lots of cool water (about 200 ml every 20 minutes);
- Wear a hat as well as loose, light long-sleeved shirts and loose-fitting trousers wherever possible;
- Providing workers access to shade, fans and air conditioning when practical to do so.

If you suspect signs of heat stress in yourself or others, immediately contact your supervisor, first aid representative or dial 0000 from an internal phone or 000 from a mobile phone to call for emergency assistance.

Take down: 10/03/2017 **Authorized by**: Work Environment Group
Contact: whs@anu.edu.au for additional information

Staff and Students are reminded to report incidents to their supervisor and/or through the HORUS/ISIS online incident notification systems.