



Preventing Heat Illnesses

Monticello, IA – Innovative Ag Services Co. (IAS), Every year, thousands of workers become sick from exposure to heat, and some even die. It is very important for employees and employers to know what heat illness is, how heat illness can be prevented, and who is affected.

So what is heat illness? Your body normally cools itself by sweating. Sweating is not always enough, especially with high humidity and during hot weather. Heat illnesses range from heat rash and heat cramps to heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke requires immediate medical attention and can result in death.

So how can heat illnesses be prevented?

1. Drink water every 15 minutes, even if you are not thirsty
2. Rest in the shade to cool down.
3. Wear a hat and light-colored clothing.
4. Learn the signs of heat illness and what to do in an emergency.
5. Keep an eye on fellow workers
6. “Easy does it” on your first days of work in the heat. You need to get used to it.

Any worker who is exposed to hot and humid conditions is at risk for heat illness. Some workers might be at greater risk than others if they have not built up a tolerance to hot conditions. This includes new workers, seasonal workers, and workers who return to work after having a week or more off.

Industries most affected by heat-related illness are: construction; transportation and utilities; agriculture; building, grounds maintenance; landscaping services; and support activities for oil and gas operations.

Remember: **Water, Rest, Shade!**