



# HEAT ILLNESS

Heat illness is the body's response to prolonged exposure to high temperatures, leading to an accumulation of internal heat that can cause symptoms ranging from mild discomfort, like heat rash and cramps, to severe conditions like heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

**B  
L  
U  
E**

## PREVENT HEAT ILLNESS: PROTECT YOURSELF FROM DEADLY HEAT RISKS

Extreme heat is a deadly hazard, causing more fatalities than any other weather event. In 2023, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported 207 deaths and 1,862 injuries in the U.S. due to excessive heat. Understanding the health effects of heat exposure and taking preventive measures are crucial for your safety.

NAVSAFECOM has identified an increasing number of heat-related illness due to a lack of awareness and preparedness among personnel.

OPNAVINST 5100.19F, Navy Safety and Occupational Health Program Manual for Forces Afloat, mandates that all personnel be aware of the risks associated with heat stress, including recognizing the symptoms of heat-related illnesses, adhering to proper hydration practices, following work-rest cycles and taking necessary precautions to acclimate to hot environments. Compliance with these guidelines is essential to prevent heat illness and ensure the safety and well-being of all personnel.



### NAVSAFECOM RECOMMENDS THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

1. **Prioritize Hydration.** Ensure all personnel drink enough water daily based on body weight to prevent heat illness. Combine water intake with snacks or fluids containing electrolytes to replace lost salt and minerals.
2. **Gradual Acclimatization.** Allow personnel time to acclimate to hot conditions by gradually increasing work time over 7 to 14 days. Ensure they have opportunities to cool off and fully rehydrate during this period to reduce the risk of heat illness.
3. **Implement Work-Rest Cycles.** Establish and enforce work-rest cycles that consider environmental conditions and physical activity levels. Ensure personnel take regular breaks in shaded or cool areas to prevent overheating.
4. **Use Protective Clothing and Sunscreen.** Encourage the use of long-sleeved shirts and long pants or skirts to prevent overexposure to the sun, and promote the use of sunscreen with SPF 15 or higher, even on slightly cloudy or cool days.
5. **Conduct Regular Heat Illness Training.** Provide ongoing education on the importance of staying hydrated, recognizing early signs of heat illness and taking preventive actions.



**AFLOAT SAFETY, NAVAL SAFETY COMMAND** - Keeping our sea warriors informed and ready

Afloat Office: (757) 444-3520, ext. 7831, DSN: 564-3520

NAVSAFECOM\_CODE30\_AFLOAT@navy.mil

Surface Office: (757) 444-3520, ext. 7831

NAVSAFECOM\_CODE31\_SURFACE@navy.mil

Submarine Office: (757) 444-3520, ext. 7833

NAVSAFECOM\_CODE33\_SUBMARINES@navy.mil