

Dear Dormitory Operator,

Reducing Risk of Heat Stress Injuries Among Migrant Workers

As Singapore enters the hotter months, we seek your assistance to support your residents in adopting the following measures to reduce the risk of heat stress injuries.

Stay hydrated	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage workers to drink water regularly before they become thirsty. For those preparing for outdoor work, they should also bring sufficient water with them for their work day.
Shaded Cool Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stay in a shaded area with good airflow during the day.• Remain indoors and stay away from direct sunlight if possible. Avoid recreational activities during the day.
Good Airflow	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Dormitory rooms should be adequately ventilated with external cooler air by switching on all fans or blowers in each room throughout the day.• Warmer air can be extracted out of the room through exhaust fans.
Emergency Evacuation Protocols	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Emergency/evacuation protocols should be put in place so that a suspected case of heat stress injury can be promptly evacuated to the nearest hospital.

2. Keep a look out for your residents for common signs and symptoms of heat stress (see **Annex A**). The following groups of workers are more vulnerable to heat stress:

- a) Workers with known pre-existing medical conditions such as diabetes, heart disease
- b) Workers who are sick and who recently recovered from an illness
- c) Obese workers
- d) New workers who are not acclimatised to the local climate,
- e) Workers who are observing Ramadan fasting

3. Heat stress injury can lead to death or permanent disability if not treated immediately. You can refer to **Annex B** on the 7R approach for first-aid treatment on heat stress. When treating a worker with a suspected heat stress injury, rapid cooling is important to reduce severity and risk of complications. Measures should be taken to cool the worker before transferring him quickly to the hospital.

4. We seek your assistance to share the poster at this [link](#) with your residents. This is a system-generated email. Please do not reply to this email address. For feedback or further queries, please [contact us](#).

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Annex A - Signs and symptoms of heat stress

Signs (visible to employer and fellow workers)	Symptoms (experienced by affected worker)
<p>General Appearance</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fainting spells, especially after a change in body position e.g. from sitting to standing or after prolonged standing • Walking unsteadily or staggering • Unconsciousness or experiencing a seizure <p>Behaviour</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confused, disoriented • Irritable, anxious • Aggressive <p>Cardio-respiratory (heart and lung)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hyperventilating (rapid, shallow breathing) <p>Musculoskeletal (limbs and muscles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Muscular cramping 	<p>General Condition</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feeling faint or ‘seeing stars’ especially after a change in body position e.g. from sitting to standing or after prolonged standing • Feeling dizzy or giddy, loss of balance • Feeling weak • Feels like vomiting (nausea) • Headache • Sensitivity to light, blurring of vision <p>Cardio-respiratory (heart and lung)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Shortness of breath • Chest discomfort • Palpitations (fast heartbeat) <p>Musculoskeletal (limbs and muscles)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cramping in lower limbs • Tingling sensation or numbness in the hands
<p>Gastrointestinal (stomach)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vomiting • Sudden loss of bladder or bowel function <p>Dermatological (skin)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dehydrated with dark sunken eyes and/or parched lips <p>Note: Skin symptoms may deceive. Heat casualties may appear pale or flushed; their skin may feel cool or hot, and wet or dry to touch</p>	<p>Gastrointestinal (stomach)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dry mouth • Vomiting • Abdominal pain

Annex B - 7R approach for first-aid treatment of heat injuries

R ecognise symptoms	Recognise symptoms of heat stress and report early.
R est casualty	Get the worker to sit or lie down in a cool shaded area with good ventilation.
R emove clothing	Loosen or remove excess clothing as appropriate (while preserving the modesty of the worker).
R educe temperature	Reduce body temperature as fast as possible by applying ice packs, wet towels or cool water. Other measures include fanning the casualty (to promote evaporative cooling), the use of cooling blankets and subjecting the worker to cold water immersion.
R ehydrate	Rehydrate by providing fluids. If casualty is unconscious, do not provide fluids by mouth as this may result in choking.
R esuscitate	If the worker becomes unconscious, call for help immediately and resuscitate using principles of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) if first-aider is trained to do so.
R ush to hospital	Rush worker to the nearest hospital if the worker is not alert.