

## TIPS TO REDUCE THE IMPACT OF HEAT AND HUMIDITY



A number of actions can be taken to help reduce the effect of heat stress. Learn the signs and symptoms of heat stress. Being trained to know when heat stress is possible and recognizing the symptoms will provide the opportunity to take action. Also, it is a good idea to work in teams to help monitor each other.

Workers do have some ability to adjust to hot work conditions. Gradual exposure to heat gives the body time to become accustomed to the higher environmental conditions. Both new workers and workers returning from time off need time to adjust to the hot work environment.

Taking regular rest breaks helps allow the body to cool down, and drinking plenty of cool water regularly during work activities can minimize the effects of heat and humidity. Also, taking advantage of a shady spot whenever possible can help reduce the likelihood of heat stress.

Clothing also can impact susceptibility to heat-related illness. Wear lightweight and light-colored garments and fabrics that don't trap heat. Fabrics that promote evaporative cooling by transferring sweat from the skin to the outer surface of the garments for easier and faster evaporation can be beneficial.

Finally, avoid caffeine and alcohol. These beverages promote water loss — thereby increasing the risks of heat-related illness — and should not be consumed before or during work activities.

Each of these actions can help reduce the effects of heat stress. The two most effective ways of reducing heat stress are taking regular rest breaks and drinking plenty of water, particularly when the thermometer rises above 95 degrees with high humidity levels.



## Variety...it's the spice of life

Many of us are familiar with Benjamin Franklin's quote "In this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes." Life is change. Sometimes we can't wait for a change, while other times change drags us kicking and screaming. Regardless of how we feel about it, *change will come!* Change brings vitality and newness, but sometimes results in stressful issues. What can we do to ease the tension? Use these few tips as you progress through change:

- 1) Learn to be flexible
- 2) Have a positive attitude
- 3) Live in the now
- 4) Ask for help
- 5) Look at the big picture
- 6) Focus on the things that stay the same.



Remember change is natural. It helps us evolve and improve. Change may be uncomfortable, but it's an opportunity for growth. Our attitude does make all the difference. We may not be able to control the change happening in our lives, but we are able to control how we respond to it. If life brings you to a situation in which you need to ask for help, remember Cigna offers free Stress management classes to covered members and/or LifeServices EAP provides confidential counseling to all Rutherford County Employees.