

THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE DIGEST

Weekly Wellness & Safety Tips from Work Right NW



THE RULE OF COOL

BY HALEY TOO HILL, MS, ATC, LAT

It's hot! But *it's a dry heat...* I mean, *it's not the heat, it's the humidity!* Whichever hot weather cliché you choose, what remains is summer days are here to stay for awhile. And with hotter than normal temperatures country-wide, this means we need to stay PREPARED, stay hydrated, and stay cool!

RISKY TO GET CRISPY


The Center for Disease Control [explains](#) those at greatest risk for heat-related illness are the young, elderly, those with chronic conditions, and those that participate in summertime activities - and yes, this includes working outside! Not only do we need to be cautious mowing the lawn, gardening, and watering, but this means when our day-to-day work puts us in these situations. Construction work is a prime example of an industry with an increased risk of heat-related illnesses.

SUN BLOCK

There are several ways to protect yourself from heat-related illness when working outdoors in the sun. As we've [previously discussed](#), proper hydration is key! As well, OSHA [recommends](#) wearing lightweight, loose fitting, and light-colored clothes, while the Mayo Clinic [states](#) wearing too much clothing or too tightly fitted clothing affects the body to cool itself properly. Opt to wear fabrics that breathe or polyester *blends* that have moisture wicking properties.

A COOLER CHOICE

Apart from hydration and proper attire, we'd like to offer another cool option to keep in your toolbox - cooling towels! These towels can help regulate body temperatures through evaporative cooling technology. Simply put, they act as an artificial temperature regulator when your body isn't regulating temperature as it should in hot weather. While [studies](#) have *not* shown cooling towels to reduce core body temperature, Work Right recommends they not be a 'fix-all' to prevent heat-illness. However, they're certainly helpful tools in the ongoing struggle to prevent the effects of heat-related illnesses in low to medium humidity environments.

Interested in trying out a cooling towel? Find the steps for use to the right. Don't have a cooling towel? Try a homemade one from your own personal stock of hand or sports towels! 

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WHAT IS HEAT-RELATED ILLNESS?

Heat-Related Illness /hit-r'leɪtɪd 'ɪlnəs/ noun: heat-related illness, such as heat exhaustion and/or heat stroke, is the condition when a person's body temperature increases faster than it can cool itself down, which can lead to brain and other vital organ damage.



HOW TO USE A COOLING TOWEL



Soak the towel thoroughly with cool water for a couple of minutes



Wring out the excess water



Give it a good shake or whip a few times to activate cooling. As long as your towel is moist, you can 'recharge' your towel.



Haley Toohill, MS, ATC, LAT || Haley is an Injury Prevention Specialist in Arizona. She grew up in Illinois where she pursued further education, studied, and played basketball and softball at Parkland College and Millikin University. She holds a master's degree from A.T. Still University. She enjoys riding her peloton, exploring new foods and cocktails, and hanging out with her dog, Gracie Lou Freebush.

Work Right NW is changing the way that companies view workplace hazards. Our focus is on educating the workforce to prevent injury. We provide access to Injury Prevention Specialists in the workplace to address the early signs of discomfort. We are changing the industry one company at a time by helping one person at a time.

