



HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# WORKPLACE HEALTH

## Preventing Heat Stress in the Workplace

With summer upon us once again, worksites need to take steps now to ensure that everyone is aware of the dangers of heat stress and know how to prevent this hazard.

The victims of heat exhaustion and heat stroke are often unable to notice symptoms because their brain's ability to think clearly is impaired. In these cases, their survival depends on the ability of co-workers to spot the symptoms and seek immediate medical assistance for those afflicted.

Workers most at risk for heat-related illnesses include outdoor workers and those who work in hot environments such as smelters, furnaces and bakeries. However, heat stress can affect anyone, including young and fit workers. Summer students or new employees may be particularly at risk because their bodies are not acclimatized to working in high heat or very humid conditions like other employees. Furthermore, they might be afraid to speak up if they are having symptoms because they fear being judged as complainers or underperformers by co-workers or supervisors.

The following is a primer on how to spot heat stress, and the steps necessary to prevent it.

**If you or a co-worker experience any of the following symptoms, seek help immediately:**

- Rapid breathing
- Weakness, dizziness or fainting

- Excessive sweating
- Rashes or cramping
- Headache or confusion

**Co-workers can help employees who are exhibiting heat illness by doing the following:**

- Call for help
- Move the person to a cooler location
- Remove excess clothing from the person
- Cool the person by sponging with cool, wet towels
- Give the person sips of cool water if they are not nauseated or vomiting (do not give ice cold water)

**Workers can protect themselves from heat stress by:**

- Drinking lots of fluid to replace perspiration – one cup of water about every twenty minutes
- Avoiding working in direct sunlight
- Reducing the pace of work
- Increasing the number of breaks and taking breaks in cool or shaded areas
- Scheduling heavy work for cooler periods such as early morning or later in the day
- Wearing light-coloured, lightweight clothing
- Reducing the physical demands of work by using mechanical aids such as hoists or dollies

For more detailed information about heat stress, check out the following guide produced by the Ontario Ministry of Labour: [http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/gl\\_heat.php](http://www.labour.gov.on.ca/english/hs/pubs/gl_heat.php)



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# Share the Road!

## Same Roads - Same Rules - Same Rights

You may have noticed the roadside signs in both Haldimand and Norfolk Counties that dot popular bicycle riding routes. These signs are to act as reminders to drivers and cyclists that they both have the right to be on the road and that they both have to follow the rules of the road. But what does that mean, exactly?

### Drivers:

#### Watch for bicyclists.

- Expect to see bicyclists on roads. Bicyclists may ride one metre from the road edge, but can occupy any part of a lane if safety warrants.
- Check for bicyclists before opening your car door.
- Pay special attention to children on bicycles, as they are often unpredictable.

#### Pass with care.

- Treat a bicyclist as you would any slow moving vehicle. Pass only when the road ahead is clear.
- Slow down when passing and give at least one metre of space between you and the bicyclist.
- Check over your shoulder before moving back into your travel lane to make sure you have left enough space.

#### Yield to bicyclists.

- When turning left, yield to oncoming bicyclists. Experienced bicyclists can be moving faster than you think.
- Do not make a right hand turn in front of bicyclists. Assume they are travelling through unless they signal otherwise.

**Don't honk your horn.** It can startle bicyclists and cause them to swerve into traffic.



### Bicyclists:

#### Obey all traffic laws, signs and signals.

#### Ride on the right.

- Always ride in the same direction as traffic, in single file, far enough from the road edge to keep a straight line.
- Use any part of a lane when your safety warrants it (e.g. to avoid obstacles, or if the lane isn't wide enough for drivers to safely pass).

#### Be predictable.

- Ride in a straight line.
- Stay about one metre from the road edge, curb or parked cars to avoid hazards.
- Use hand signals to communicate turns and stops to other road users.

#### Be visible.

- Wear brightly coloured clothing, including reflectors.
- Use lights in low light conditions [red on the rear, white on the front]
- Stay out of drivers' blind spots – especially truck drivers.
- Make eye contact with drivers – it's the best way to know they see you.

#### Be courteous.

- When riding in groups, leave gaps to allow space for drivers or other bicyclists to pass.
- Acknowledge drivers with a wave when they've passed you safely.
- Yield to pedestrians. Warn others with a ring of your bell or friendly greeting before passing.

#### Take care of your gear and yourself.

- Make sure your bike is well-maintained.
- Wear a helmet and make sure it fits correctly.

If you would like to 'share' this message with others, order a Share the Road bumper magnet by contacting Michele Crowley at the Health Unit.

Phone: 519-426-6170 / 905-318-6623 Ext. 3239

Email: [michele.crowley@hnhu.org](mailto:michele.crowley@hnhu.org)

Web: [www.hnhu.org/sharetheroad](http://www.hnhu.org/sharetheroad)

## Upcoming Events

### June

- Stroke Awareness Month

### July

- 21 - 28 – National Drowning Prevention Week

### August

- 1 - 7 National Breastfeeding Week

## CONDOMS AND COMMUNICATION Make Sex Much Safer

Practising safer sex allows you to care for both your own health and the health of your partner, without sacrificing your sex life. Condom use protects you from getting or passing on sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and unintended pregnancy. Safer sex also involves talking with your partner, discussing activities, risks and coming to an agreement about condom use.

Whether you have vaginal, anal or oral sex, it definitely pays to play it safe!

### STI/HIV Facts

- STIs/HIV are passed from person to person through sexual activity and the exchange of bodily fluids (semen, vaginal fluids, saliva and blood).
- It is not a disgrace to become infected with a STI, it can happen to anyone.
- STIs are most common in adults under the age of 25, but are quickly rising among the 40+ age group.
- Many STIs in women have no symptoms, so they may not know they have an STI.
- If an STI in women is left untreated, it may lead to infertility, pelvic inflammatory disease, chronic pelvic pain and/or cervical cancer.

If you have symptoms, regardless of whether you are a male or female, see your doctor or attend a clinic right away. Some symptoms may include:

- Unusual discharge (amount, odour, color) from the penis, vagina, or rectum
- Pain or swelling in the genitals or lower body
- Itching, sores, bumps, or rash on the genitals or anus
- Unusual bleeding or bleeding after intercourse

**No condom? No sex.**

**Protect yourself and your partner by practising safer sex.**

For more information or to get tested, please contact the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit's Sexual Health Program at (519) 426-6170 or (905) 318-5367.

# What's lurking in your summer lunchbox?

Hmm. What's on the menu when you pack your lunch for work? Tuna fish? Ham and cheese?

How about a little e-coli, salmonella or listeria?

On hot summer days, your lunch box can be an all you can eat bacteria buffet.

If cold cuts, last night's leftovers or egg salad sandwiches are in your lunchbox, keep in mind that perishable foods such as these can look, smell and taste just fine, even when they are not. If left sitting out on a jobsite, in a vehicle or in a locker for more than two hours (one hour if the temperature is above 90 degrees), they are breeding grounds for bacteria which can cause a foodborne illness.

Any foods refrigerated at home must be kept chilled when brought to work. Always store your lunch in a refrigerator, or if that is not an option, cooled by packing with ice, a gel pack or a frozen juice box. If you work outside, keep your lunch in a shady spot.

Leftover bits of lunch that sit in your lunchbox for the afternoon can also lead to bacteria growth, so always wash your lunchbox with soap and water between uses.

### Choose Lunch Foods Wisely

Some foods can be safely eaten even if they have not been chilled.

Remember peanut-butter and jelly sandwiches? This humble sandwich was an ingenious invention from a time before the widespread availability of home refrigeration. Because bread, peanut butter and jelly are all non-perishable, PB & J makes the perfect sandwich for brown-bag lunches.

Other examples of foods that don't need to stay cold include whole fruits, veggies, crackers, mustard, pickles, and unopened cans of meat and fish.

Above all, remember the golden rule of food safety, "When in doubt, throw it out!"

*Submitted by Josh Daley,  
Health Promoter*



# Workplace Health Program

Over the past few years, the workplace health committee lead by the Health Unit, has hosted a variety of networking sessions. These well attended sessions aimed to raise awareness and offer information regarding various workplace health topics. Bounded in research, we know that the benefits of healthy workplaces by far outweigh the costs related to unhealthy employees.

In an effort to ensure optimal workplace health services, the Health Unit conducted a thorough review of best practices. As a result, our approach to workplace health has changed. We will now be offering individualized workplace consultations and support upon request, rather than hosting the networking sessions. This will allow for tailored information and more in-depth support (e.g., resources, healthy workplace policy development, etc.).

For more information, please contact us at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3236. **We look forward to supporting your workplace!**

*Michelle Pasichnyk*  
Program Manager, Population Health Team

## Strawberry-Avocado Salsa

Serve this sweet and savoury salsa with roast chicken, sautéed fish, or grilled pork tenderloin. You can also enjoy it as a snack with baked tortilla chips.

### Ingredients

- 1 cup finely chopped local strawberries
- 1/4 cup finely chopped peeled avocado
- 2 tablespoons finely chopped red onion
- 2 tablespoons chopped fresh cilantro
- 1/2 teaspoon grated lime rind
- 2 tablespoons fresh lime juice
- 2 teaspoons finely chopped seeded jalapeno pepper
- 1/4 teaspoon sugar

### Preparation

Combine all ingredients in a medium bowl; toss gently. Serve immediately.

<http://www.cookinglight.com/>



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