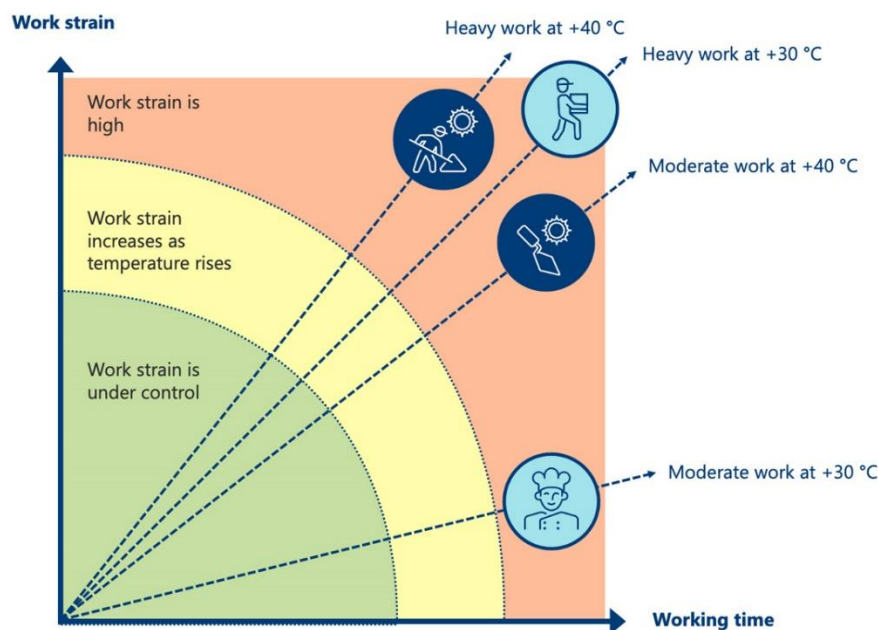


Workload and Heat Stress at Work

In the future, working in hot conditions will become more common in Finland. These tips are mainly for workers used to the Finnish climate.

Always consider the physical load of the work
when working in the heat!



Moderate work, for example:

- Bakery work
- Masonry
- Forestry and gardening work
- Agricultural work

Heavy work, for example:

- Shoveling
- Using heavy tools
- Lifting and carrying heavy loads
- The heaviest tasks of a firefighter

Work is harder when it's physically heavy and done in hot conditions.
Besides using your muscles, your body also has to work harder to
keep its temperature under control.



Breaks should be longer if the work is physically heavy

- How many breaks you take and how long they are depend on how hard the work is.
 - Heavy work makes your body heat up faster than light or moderate work.
 - After heavy work, your body cools down more slowly.
- Your body keeps getting warmer during the day, even if you take breaks.
- Taking enough breaks helps slow down the rise in your body's heat.

Before working in the heat

- Don't do hard exercise before work, like running or intense workouts.
- Drink fluids before the workday starts.
- Wear only the clothes you really need under your work clothes.

During the workday

- Drink water regularly.
 - If the work for a long time, also drink electrolyte drinks, e.g. sports drinks or mineral water.
- Eat regularly, even if you're not hungry. Heat can make you feel less hungry.
- Take breaks during work. Rest and avoid hard physical activity.
- Spend breaks in a cool place, normal room temperature is enough.
- Use things that help you cool down, like fans, cold packs, or a wet towel.
- Take off protective gear during breaks if you can.
- Learn the signs of overheating and act on them right away.

After the workday

- Go to a cool place and rest.
- Drink enough water and eat regularly, even after work.

What changes heat tolerance

- It takes about two weeks to adapt to hot conditions.
- Workers who are well-rested handle heat better.
- Being fit helps you tolerate heat. Especially if you do endurance training.
- Body fat works like insulation. Too much fat makes it harder for your body to get rid of heat.
- As people get older, it's harder to control body temperature. Illnesses and medicines can make this even worse.

Heat affects the body and mind

- When your muscles work, they create heat in your body.
- When you do heavy work in a hot environment, your body temperature rises even more.
- When the body temperature rises:
 - the heart is strained
 - muscles get tired
- Heat makes it harder to focus and pay attention. It can also make accidents more likely at work.
- Heat also causes mental stress, especially when the feeling is uncomfortable and the body cannot be cooled down.

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