

Heat & Hydration Policy

Practice or competition in hot and humid environmental conditions poses special problems for athletes. Heat stress and resulting heat illness is a primary concern in these conditions. Although deaths from heat illness are rare, constant surveillance and education are necessary to prevent heat-related problems.

General Considerations for Risk Reduction

Encourage proper education regarding heat illnesses (for athletes, coaches, parents, medical staff, etc...). Education about risk factors should focus on hydration needs, acclimatization, work/rest ratio, signs and symptoms of heat illness due to over-exertion, treatment, dietary supplements, nutritional issues, and fitness status.

Assure that trained staff members have the authority to alter work/rest ratios, practice schedules, amount of equipment, and withdrawal of individuals from participation based on environment and/or athlete's medical condition.

General Guidelines

- An initial complete medical history and physical exam is required.
- Gradual acclimatization of the athlete to hot/humid conditions is essential. Athletes should gradually increase exposure to hot and/or humid environmental conditions over a period of seven to 10 days to best achieve acclimatization.
- Athletes should be encouraged to drink plenty of fluids prior to and after workouts/games. This will help reduce the chance of heat-related illness. In addition, athletes should be encouraged to eat well balanced meals.
- Clothing and protective gear can increase heat stress. Dark colors absorb solar radiation, clothing and protective gear interfere with the evaporation of sweat and other avenues of heat loss. During the acclimatization process, athletes should practice in t-shirts, shorts, socks and shoes.
- Team Managers and Coaches will get a heat index reading from an approved local source and follow the guidelines appropriate for that heat index reading.

Specific Guidelines

Heat index of less than 100 degrees -

YELLOW

- No Restrictions – games played with Water Breaks and proper substitutions.

Heat index of 100-105 degrees -

GOLD

- U8-U10- Outdoor workouts should be shortened to 1 hour with 5 minute breaks every 15 minutes at the minimum. USE SUBSTITUTIONS TO GIVE 5 MINUTE BREAKS.
- U11-U14-Outdoor workouts should be shortened to 1 ¼ hours with 5 minute breaks every 20 minutes at the minimum. USE SUBSTITUTIONS TO GIVE 5 MINUTE BREAKS.
- U15-U18- high workouts should be limited to 1 1/2 hours with 10 minute breaks every 30 minutes at the minimum. USE SUBSTITUTIONS TO GIVE 10 MINUTE BREAKS.
- "Extra or makeup" work should take place indoors.

Heat index of 106-110 degrees -

ORANGE

- Refer to guidelines above for Heat Index of 100-105 degrees.
- **No games should be played with a Heat Index exceeding 105 degrees.**

Heat Index of greater than 110 degrees –

RED

- **No games should be played with a Heat Index exceeding 105 degrees.**
- No outdoor workout.

