



HEAT AND 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
- Education about risk factors should focus on:
Hydration needs, acclimatization, work/rest ratio, signs and symptoms of heat illness due to overexertion, 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.

[TSSAA Heat Index Calculation Chart](#)

SPECIFIC GUIDELINES

Heat index of less than 100 degrees

- No Restrictions

Heat index of 100-105 degrees

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

Heat index of 106-110 degrees

- Refer to guidelines above for Heat Index of 100-105 degrees.
- No outdoor practices for U8-U14.
- Outdoor workouts should be shortened to 1 hour for U15-U18.
- No outdoor conditioning at the end of practice.

Heat Index of greater than 110 degrees

- No outdoor workout.

COLD POLICY

Any athletic activity scheduled to take place at an outside setting may be rescheduled if the temperature is 32 degrees or below. Wind chill also factors into the decision. Every effort shall be made for this decision to be made by 1:00 pm on the day of the game or practice.

WIND CHILL TEMPERATURE (WCT) INDEX TEMPERATURE IN DEGREES FAHRENHEIT													
	40	35	30	25	20	15	10	5	0	-5	-10	-15	-20
5	36	31	25	19	13	7	1	-5	-11	-16	-22	-28	-34
10	34	27	21	15	9	3	-4	-10	-16	-22	-28	-35	-41
15	32	25	19	13	6	0	-7	-13	-19	-26	-32	-39	-45
20	30	24	17	11	4	-2	-9	-15	-22	-29	-35	-42	-48
25	29	23	16	9	3	-4	-11	-17	-24	-31	-37	-44	-51
30	28	22	15	8	1	-5	-12	-19	-26	-33	-39	-46	-53
35	28	21	14	7	0	-7	-14	-21	-27	-34	-41	-48	-55
40	27	20	13	6	-1	-8	-15	-22	-29	-36	-43	-50	-57
45	27	19	12	5	-2	-9	-16	-23	-30	-37	-44	-51	-58
50	26	19	12	4	-3	-10	-17	-24	-31	-38	-45	-52	-60

LIGHTNING POLICY

While the probability of being struck by lightning is extremely low, the odds are significantly greater when a storm is in the area and proper safety precautions are not followed. Prevention and education are the keys to lightning safety.

The Executive Director and/or administration will monitor the weather forecasts and radar the day of the game and during the event. All information received about threatening weather will be distributed through the chain of command.

Be aware of any “Watches” or “Warnings” that have been issued for the area by the National Weather Service.

- A “Watch” means conditions are favorable for severe weather to develop in the area.
- A “Warning” means that severe weather has been reported in the area and everyone should take precautions.

CHAIN OF COMMAND

- During outside activities, such as practices, conditioning and soccer games, the Executive Director and coaches shall be responsible for activating the Lightning Safety Policy by suspending the practice or activities.
- The Executive Director and/or coaches will communicate and make the decision to suspend the practice or activity.
- The Executive Director and/or Coaches will communicate with the game officials, coaches, administrators, and teams on the field.
- Teams and spectators will be instructed to move to safe locations.

DEFINING SAFE LOCATIONS

A top priority of lightning safety is removing athletes from the field of play and into a safe location.

Primary Location

- Any building that is frequently occupied by people. Plumbing and electrical wiring helps to ground the structure.

Secondary Locations

- If no primary location is available, any vehicle with a HARD METAL ROOF and rolled up windows can provide safety. DO NOT TOUCH the sides of the vehicle. Golf carts and convertibles provide NO SAFETY in a lightning storm. With a vehicle, the HARD METAL ROOF dissipates the lightning, not the rubber tires.

Unsafe Shelters

- Open fields and high places
- Isolated trees
- Gazebos
- Rain or picnic shelters
- Metal fences
- Water

“FLASH TO BANG”

Suspension and Resumption of Athletic Activities

Flash to Bang will be the primary method used to determine how far the thunderstorm is from the activity.

When suspicious cloud/storm approaches, the coach, assistant coach, and/or administrator shall monitor the approaching storm using the Flash to Bang method. Simply count the number of seconds between the lightning “flash” and the thunder “bang.” Divide the number of seconds by 5 to determine the distance the strike is from your activity.

EXAMPLE: If 15 seconds are counted between the flash and bang, divide 15 by 5. The lightning is 3 miles away.

Play must be suspended as flash to bang reaches 50 seconds or the 10 mile range.

“30-30 RULE”

Criteria for suspension of activities:

- By the time the flash to bang count is approaching 30 seconds; all participants should already be inside a safe shelter.

Criteria for resumption of activities:

- Wait at least 30 minutes after each subsequent flash of lightning or bang of thunder before leaving the safe shelter to resume activities.

Once a game or practice has been suspended, the storm should continue to be monitored. No contest or practice should be resumed until no lightning has been detected within a 10 mile range for 30 consecutive minutes using the Flash to Bang method.

Each time a new lightning is strike detected or a clap of thunder is heard, the 30 minute clock restarts.

Although the home team is responsible for each game or match, it should be noted that the coach, assistant coach and/or administrator is responsible for the safety and well-being of adults and students in his/her charge.