

Part I: Education

Educating athletes to the need of how to best take care of themselves during hot weather workouts are only one part of the education needed to properly care for athletes. Coaches should educate themselves to stay abreast of all the latest information available concerning heat related problems among athletes. Coaches should also help educate parents and others about their roles in helping to prevent heat related problems in athletes.

Coaches should always be aware of symptoms of heat illnesses; which are as follows:

IN OTHERS IN YOURSELF

Irritability Headache

Confusion Dizziness

Belligerence Unusual Fatigue

Hyperventilation Heat Flush

Refusal to Drink Paradoxical Chills

Staggering Tingling Fingers

Ten tips coaches should know:

- Easy access to water and electrolyte replacement drinks
- Gradually increase intensity and duration of workouts
- Use shade during breaks
- Quick access to cold towels and or cooling tubs
- No prove yourself drills in the heat
- Closely monitor "At Risk" or poorly conditioned players

Part II: Acclimation

All Athletes should undergo a period of acclimation to help reduce the negative affects of heat during hot weather workouts.

Benefits of Heat Acclimation:

- Better drinking habits
- More body water
- More blood
- Lower heart rate
- More blood to skin
- Sweat sooner
- Sweat more
- Sweat more widely
- Sweat less salty
- Better heart output
- Stay cooler

Part III: Hydration

Proper hydration is essential in protecting athletes and maximizing their performance during hot weather. Dehydrated players heat up faster and lose the benefits of acclimation. Coaches should make fluids available at all times during practice and should monitor athletes to make sure they are consuming enough fluids. Some athletes may lose more than three quarts of sweat per hour during the hot and humid weather. The more an athlete sweats, the more susceptible they are to dehydration. Sweat loss leads to dehydration, fatigue, cramps, heat intolerance, and slow recovery. Athletes need to consume more than the eight cups of water per day normally recommended for proper hydration. Some will need several quarts to replace fluids lost during workouts.

Don't rely on thirst

Thirst kicks in too late and shuts off too early. Thirst usually occurs when athletes have already begun to dehydrate. Athletes should drink 20oz. of fluids within an hour or two before practice or games. Drink regularly during practice and games to minimize weight loss.

Salt is not an enemy – athletes should use salt on food during meals.

Dehydration:

WARNING SIGNS TREATMENT

Thirst- Stop activity

Irritability- Rest in cool shaded area

Fatigue- Drink fluids

Loss of Performance

Muscle Cramps

Nausea

Vomiting

Guidelines for proper hydration

- 2-3 hours before practice or games, drink 17-20oz. of fluid and another 7-10oz. 10-20 minutes prior to the start of an event
- After exercising, drink at least 20oz. per pound of weight loss within two hours of finishing, training, or competition
- Athletes should monitor their frequency of urination as well as the color of their urine. A well hydrated athlete will have a clear urine, where as urine from an athlete not well hydrated will have a yellow to orange color

Part IV: Monitoring Athletes

Coaches should observe athletes frequently and carefully before, during, and after practice. Coaches should be aware of the signs of the following heat related problems.

Symptoms of Heat Illness:

IN OTHERS IN YOURSELF

Irritability Headache

Confusion Dizziness

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Heat Exhaustion:

WARNING SIGNS TREATMENT

Headache- Rest in cold shaded area

Nausea- Drink Fluids

Vomiting- Loosen or remove clothing and equipment

Weakness

Dizziness

Rapid Pulse

Profuse Sweating

Heat Stroke:

WARNING SIGNS TREATMENT

High Temperature- **Seek emergency medical treatment**

Nausea- Cool First then transport

Drowsiness

Confusion or Disorientation

Irrational behavior

Collapse/Coma