

AIR QUALITY AND HOT WEATHER PROCEDURES

**HOT WEATHER PROCEDURE**

By the nature of our weather, coaches should be well aware of the physical problems for their athletes when practices are conducted in hot weather. Hot weather practices causing heat illness to athletes is a major concern of the American College of Sports Medicine, the American Academy of Pediatrics, The National Trainers Association, the National Federation of High Schools, and Fresno Unified School District.

Many States have adopted Procedures and Policies on a State wide basis to deal with Hot Weather Practices/Games. The Procedures and Polices include limiting practice times, modifying practice, and canceling practice/games. For the safety of our student/athletes, Fresno Unified School District has implemented the following Procedures:

Stage 1: Forecast under 95 Degrees	All Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire. And, athletes should be able to get water when they feel the need.</li> <li>✓ Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.</li> <li>✓ Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.</li> </ul>
Stage 2: Forecast from 95 Degrees to 99 Degrees	All Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire. And, athletes should be able to get water when they feel the need.</li> <li>✓ Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.</li> <li>✓ Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.</li> </ul>
Stage 3: Forecast from 100-104	All Sports <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Provide ample amounts of water. This means that water should always be available and athletes should be able to take in as much water as they desire. And, athletes should be able to get water when they feel the need.</li> </ul>

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<p>Stage 3, Continued</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Mandatory water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration.</li> <li>✓ Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action.</li> <li>✓ Sites need to monitor their indoor gyms. Some gyms can become hotter than the outside temp. If a site feels its gym is at Stage 4 Heat, all practices and games should be canceled.</li> <li>✓ FOOTBALL: Coaches need to be sensitive to heat related issues.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If humidity is forecasted for 25%+, or if the day is muggy (humid), be prepared for a stage 4 or 5.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Stage 4, Forecast for 105+          Schools should be prepared for a <b>Stage 4 Heat Advisory</b> from the District Athletic Office. <b><u>A Stage 4 issued for Heat means all practices, games, and events are canceled.</u></b></p>	<p>All Sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ No long distance running or strenuous conditioning/practice if Heat Index is 105 or higher.</li> <li>✓ Sites need to monitor their indoor gyms. Some gyms can become hotter than the outside temperature. If a site feels its gym has exceeded Stage 4 Heat, all practices and games should be canceled.</li> <li>✓ Frequent hydration whenever needed</li> <li>✓ Frequent shade breaks</li> <li>✓ If possible, practice before 11:00am and after 7:00 pm.</li> <li>✓ All Coaches need to be sensitive to heat related issues.             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>FOOTBALL: No Pads if Heat Index is 105+</b></li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Stage 5, Heat Advisory is issued when heat index is 105 and night time heat index is above 80. Red Flag will be in effect.</p>	<p>All Sports</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ All Games and Practices Cancelled until Heat Advisory is lifted.</li> </ul>

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**Precautions For Hot Weather Athletics**

The main problem associated with exercising in hot weather is water loss through sweating. Water loss is best replaced by coaches allowing a “water as needed” policy. The athlete should be allowed water anytime he or she feels the need. **Coaches should make sure all athletes are taking in fluids.** In addition, the following precautions should be taken:

1. Physical examination with athlete’s school health-history available to the examining physician. State high school associations recommendations should be followed with annual reference to heat stress.
2. Lack of physical fitness impairs the performance of an athlete who participates in high temperatures. Coaches should know the physical condition of their athletes and gear their practice schedules accordingly.
3. **The acclimatization factor to heat is important.** It is the process of becoming adjusted to heat, and it is essential to provide for gradual acclimation of hot weather activities. It is suggested that a graduated physical conditioning program be used and that 80% acclimatization can be expected to occur after the first 7-10 days. It is fully recommended that our coaches wisely use spring practice time, the preconditioning week in August, and pre-schedule practice with acclimatization well in mind.
4. The old idea that water should be withheld from athletes during workouts has no scientific foundation. **The most important safeguard to the health of the athlete is the replacement of water.** Iced water is preferable.
5. Know both the temperature and the humidity. The greater the humidity, the more difficult it is for the body to cool itself. Fresno, generally, has low humidity, and that is a plus. But our late summer and early fall usually have very high temperatures-we must be just as alert and preventive.
6. Cooling by evaporation is proportional to the area of skin exposed, in extremely hot weather; reduce the amount of covering on the body as much as possible. Never use rubberized clothing.
7. After strenuous practices, athletes should replace fluids. Water or sports drinks should be encouraged.
8. Athletes should weigh each day before and after practice and weight charts checked. Generally, a three percent weight loss is safe through sweating and over a three percent weight loss is in the danger zone. Compensate with a less rigorous workout in weather that is hot.
9. Watch your athlete’s carefully-particularly those who lose much weight, overweight athletes, and the over-eager athlete. Some trouble signs are nausea, incoherence, fatigue, weakness, vomiting, cramps, weak rapid pulse, visual disturbance, and unsteadiness.
10. Know what to do in case of such an emergency. Be familiar with immediate first aid practice and prearranged procedures for obtaining medical care, including ambulance service.

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**Signs of Heat Illness**

**Heat Cramps**

Painful cramps and spasms of active muscles-most common in the calf muscles-caused by intense and prolonged exercise in the heat and depletions of water and salt due to sweating.

**Heat Fatigue**

Feelings of weakness and tiredness caused by depletions of water and salt due to sweating and exercise in the heat.

**MEDICAL EMERGENCIES**

**HEAT EXHAUSTION**

Heat exhaustion is one of the heat-related syndromes, which range in severity from mild heat cramps to heat exhaustion to potentially life-threatening heatstroke. Signs and symptoms of heat exhaustion often begin suddenly, sometimes after excessive exercise, heavy perspiration and inadequate fluid intake. Signs and symptoms resemble those of shock and may include:

- Feeling faint
- Nausea
- Heavy sweating
- Ashen appearance
- Rapid, weak heartbeat
- Low blood pressure
- Cool, moist skin
- Low-grade fever

**HEAT EXHAUSTION: FIRST AID**

- ✓ Get the person out of the sun and into a shady or air conditioned location.
- ✓ Lay the person down and elevate the legs and feet slightly.
- ✓ Loosen or remove the person's clothing.
- ✓ Have the person drink cool water, not iced, or a sports drink containing electrolytes.

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- ✓ Cool the person by spraying or sponging him or her with cool water and fanning.
- ✓ Monitor the person carefully. Heat exhaustion can quickly become heatstroke. **If fever greater than 102 F, fainting, confusion or seizures occur, dial 911 or call for emergency medical assistance.**

**HEATSTROKE**

Heatstroke is a life threatening medical emergency. What makes heatstroke much more severe and potentially life-threatening is that the body's normal mechanisms for dealing with heat stress, such as sweating and temperature control, are lost. The main sign of heatstroke is a markedly elevated body temperature — generally greater than 104 F — with changes in mental status ranging from personality changes to confusion and coma. Skin may be hot and dry, although in heatstroke caused by exertion, the skin is usually moist.

Other signs and symptoms may include:

- ✓ Rapid heartbeat
- ✓ Rapid and shallow breathing
- ✓ Elevated or lowered blood pressure
- ✓ Cessation of sweating
- ✓ Irritability, confusion or unconsciousness
- ✓ Fainting, which may be the first sign in older adults

**HEATSTROKE: FIRST AID**

- ✓ Move the person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned space.
- ✓ **Dial 911 or call for emergency medical assistance.**
- ✓ Cool the person by covering him or her with damp sheets or by spraying with cool water. Direct air onto the person with a fan or newspaper.

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HEAT INDEX CHART

