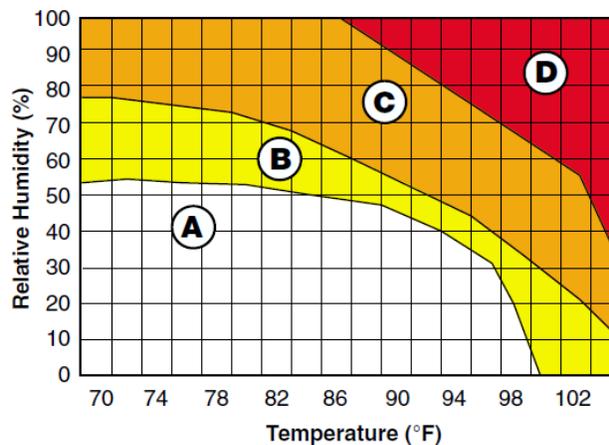




Real Colorado Hot Weather Safety Guidelines

Exercising in extreme heat can be dangerous and life-threatening. Heat-induced illness is one of the most preventable sports injuries. Exercising children face unique stresses when they perform intense exercise in the heat and are more likely to suffer heat illness.

To identify heat stress conditions, regular assessments of environmental conditions are recommended. Prior to any practice/event, the person in charge of the practice/event needs to be aware of the weather for that area. Look at the weather forecasts on a regular basis and be aware of extreme heat or humidity. When environmental conditions are extreme, soccer conditioning and training should be held during a cooler time of the day, avoiding the hottest daylight hours (10a-5p). Lower the intensity and/or shorten the activity duration. Increase the frequency and duration of breaks for rest and hydration in the shade. Sunburn increases the risk of heat illness; make sunscreen available at practices/events and encourage your athletes to apply it regularly. Remind your athletes to wear lightweight, breathable clothing during training. Encourage your athletes to improve their hydration status outside of practice/event times, such as during school hours.



- Participants should receive a 5-10 minute rest and fluid break after every 25-30 minutes of activity.
- Participants should receive a 5-10 minute rest and fluid break after every 20-25 minutes of activity.
- Participants should receive a 5-10 minute rest and fluid break after every 15-20 minutes of activity.
- Cancel or postpone all outdoor practices/games.

Be aware of the increase in temperature on artificial turf versus a natural grass field. Artificial turf temperatures can become dangerously high very quickly and can be much hotter than the weather report suggests.

Actions to take during hot weather.

- Coaches should be aware of the symptoms of heat stress (see below).
- Wear light colored, lightweight, breathable practice clothes.
- Hydrate during school hours and well in advance of the practice or game.
- Players should drink at least eight (8) glasses of water per day and focus on good nutrition.

- Bring fluids to practice or games. Drink fluids before, during, and after the practice or game.
- Have ice towels in a cooler for head and neck wraps.
- Use natural shade or a shade tent whenever not on the field. Take hydration breaks in the shade.
- Wear sunscreen.
- Training should be held during a cooler time of the day, avoiding the hottest daylight hours(10a-5p).
- Practice on natural grass, rather than artificial turf, if possible.

Awareness: Familiarize yourself with the symptoms of heat exhaustion and heat stroke caused by physical activity in hot weather.

There are 3 stages of heat-related illness, listed in order of worsening symptoms: 1. Dehydration, 2. Heat Exhaustion, 3. Heat Stroke. Below, review Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke.

Heat Exhaustion

Recognition:

- Pale, cool, moist skin
- Heavy sweating
- Feeling faint, dizzy, fatigued
- Headache, weakness, nausea
- Muscle cramps and spasms

Actions to take:

- Cool the body temperature immediately– get person out of the sun and into a shady or air-conditioned location, immerse in ice/cold water tub, or spray with cool water and place ice bags/towels in armpits, groin, neck if tub unavailable
- Give rest - allow the body to cool
- Give fluids – have the person drink cool water or electrolyte fluids (Gatorade, Powerade)
- Have the person lay down and elevate legs and feet above the level of the heart
- Monitor the person carefully and do not leave them unattended – heat exhaustion can quickly become heatstroke
- Call 9-1-1 and get emergency help if the condition of the person deteriorates, becomes unconscious, vomiting, confused or unable to take fluids, follow Real Colorado emergency action plan.

Heat Stroke - This is life threatening!

Recognition:

- Body core temperature has risen
- Flushed color, hot and dry skin – they may have stopped sweating
- Rapid heartbeat
- Rapid and shallow breathing
- Feeling chilly
- Abnormal mental status – Dizzy or lightheaded, confused, irritable, sleepy, slurred speech
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Collapse, fainting, delirium, seizures

Actions to take:

- Get medical help - Call 9-1-1 Immediately, follow Real Colorado emergency action plan
- Cool body temperature as quickly as possible – move the person into a cool, shady, or air conditioned location, if possible immerse person in ice bath, otherwise spray with cool water, direct air onto the person by fanning, use ice towels or ice bags (put ice bags on back of neck, in arm pits and groin), have the person drink cool water. Rapid cooling is essential!! Do not delay!
- Monitor symptoms until paramedics arrive

References

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American Academy of Pediatrics. Policy Statement –Climatic Heat Stress and Exercising Children and Adolescents. *Pediatrics.* 2011;128(3):e741-7.

“US Youth Soccer’s Heat Guidelines.” *soccerindiana.org.*

<http://www.soccerindiana.org/UserFiles/file/Vince%20Education/Care%20and%20Prevention/US%20Soccer%20Youth%20Soccer's%20Heat%20Guidelines.pdf>

Parts of this document was adapted from: *Inter-Association task force on exertional heat illnesses consensus statement.* June 2003. National Athletic Trainers' Association. The full document can be obtained at www.nata.org/industryresources/heatillnessconsensusstatement.pdf.