

# EXTREME HEAT GUIDELINES

## Symptoms of Heat Injury or Heat Stroke

All captains, officials, team managers, coaches and umpires owe a duty of care to players and officials and should take all reasonable steps to minimise foreseeable risks which may result in injury or damage.

High intensity exercise in a hot environment can lead to: dehydration, heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately by a medical professional. It is important to be aware and react quickly to the following symptoms of heat injury or heat stroke:

- Fatigue.
- Nausea.
- Headache.
- Confusion.
- Light-headedness.

## Emergency Plan

1. Lie the victim down.
2. Loosen and remove excessive clothing & cool by fanning.
3. Give victim a cool water to drink if conscious.
4. Apply wrapped ice packs to groins and armpits.
5. Seek medical assistance.

These symptoms indicate players should stop playing, drink more fluids and cool down. Seek medical treatment if these symptoms don't improve rapidly.

Also remember to keep an eye on other players or officials who may not realise they are suffering from dehydration or heat stress.

*The implementation of a uniform extreme heat policy for application across Victoria is not practicable. However, the following guidelines and considerations are relevant to all ISV run competitions. Based on these guidelines, centres should develop individual extreme heat policies as appropriate to their environment and competitions, and should ensure that the provisions of these policies are incorporated into playing conditions and rules applying to competitions under their control.*

## Timing of Matches and Training

Where possible, avoid scheduling training and matches during the hottest part of the day (Usually between 11am and 3pm or noon and 4pm during daylight saving time). Early morning or night games minimise the likelihood of unacceptable playing conditions.

## Hydration

- Drinks breaks should occur every 30-60 minutes in all matches/practice (every 30 minutes in conditions of extreme temperature);
- Water is the most appropriate drink for rehydration. However diluted cordial or sports drinks may be supplied. Flavoured drinks may be particularly palatable to children who have consistently poor drinking habits during exercise;
- Drinks should be available for individual players between breaks. Umpires should be advised when additional drinks are sought and players should make every effort to ensure no time is wasted;
- Players should be encouraged to have their own drink bottles. This ensures that each player has access to an adequate level of replacement fluids and reduces the risk of contamination and viruses; and where cups and a large container are used, cups should not be dipped into the container. Used cups should be washed or disposed of after use. Do not share cups.

### **Additional Considerations in Regard to Hydration**

- The local rules should state who is responsible for ensuring adequate water or other drinks are available (Generally the centre manager is responsible);
- Consideration should be given to relaxing slow over rate penalties to allow for players to drink before or after their over (which should be completed as soon as possible);
- Encourage players and officials to drink plenty of fluids (preferably water).

### **Player Rest and Rotation**

- It is recommended that wherever possible when extreme temperatures are forecast, surplus players should be selected in sports that can rotate and in indoor cricket time at change of innings be given to allow all players a rehydrate;
- Consider rotating players on and off the field;
- Team manager and coaches should be vigilant and not pressure their players in any way regarding performance or endurance.

### **Other Considerations**

- The welfare of players and umpires is paramount;
- On days of extreme heat coaches, players, umpires and officials should be aware of the possible risks and carefully monitor all players and umpires. If any show signs of distress from the heat (see symptoms of heat illness outlined on Page 1) swift and appropriate action should be taken;
- Be aware that junior players are more susceptible to heat injury;
- In extreme heat conditions ensure there are qualified trainers and first aiders at the ground. Local rules should state who is responsible for providing first aid and/or the contact details of the closest medical assistance available; and
- On days where the temperature is extremely hot at midday, serious consideration should be given to abandoning the day's play. ISV and its members should reserve the right to cancel all play when extreme temperatures are forecast. A time for the notification of the cancellation of a day's play should be included in local rules.

The most effective temperature range for indoor sports during summer months, where air conditioning is not provided is 21-24 degrees celsius. This temperature range is recommended by Work Cover as the optimum temperature range.

In temperatures of 26-30 degrees celsius, to maintain comfortable playing conditions, the following procedures should be followed:

- Provision of sufficient fans to provide adequate ventilation and air movement in the indoor environment.
- Provision of, or access to, an air-conditioned room such as a bar.
- Opening roller door or exit door to create air flow.

### **For Further Information Contact:**

**Smartplay, Sports Medicine Australia – Victorian Branch.**

**P:** (03) 9654 7733

**F:** (03) 9654 8556

**E:** smartplay@vic.sma.org.au

*The information in this guideline is of a general nature only and is not intended to be relied upon as, nor as a substitute for, specific professional advice. No responsibility for the loss occurred to any person acting on or refraining from action as a result of any material in this guideline can be accepted.*