

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS of HEAT ILLNESS:

These should be used when deciding if to remove an Athlete from Play or Training.

Heat illness occurs in strenuous sports, but may also occur in activities such as cricket, golf, and lawn bowls with prolonged exposure to hot weather. During sports activities, participants should “listen to their bodies”. If they start to experience any of the following symptoms or signs they should stop immediately.

Symptoms of heat illness may include:

- Light headedness
- Dizziness
- Nausea
- Obvious fatigue
- Cessation of sweating
- Obvious loss of skill and coordination /clumsiness or unsteadiness
- Confusion
- Aggressive or irrational behavior
- Altered consciousness
- Collapse
- Ashen grey pale skin

Heat illness in sports presents as heat exhaustion or heat stroke. Heat exhaustion is the more common sports-related heat illness. Heat stroke is rarer, but it is a life threatening condition.

Heat exhaustion: Participants, who collapse **after** exercise, are likely suffering post-exercise drop in blood pressure (postural hypotension), but some may have heat stroke.

Heat stroke: Those who show signs of altered mental function, loss of consciousness or collapse during exercise are likely suffering heat stroke. Sports participants showing signs of confusion, loss of skill, loss of coordination or irrational behavior should be stopped and removed from the field immediately.

Drinking (Hydration): Dehydration is rarely the sole cause of sports related heat illness, but maintaining an adequate water intake assists in temperature control. Carbohydrate and electrolytes in sports drinks help maintain performance in endurance events. Try to avoid alcohol, tea and coffee – they make dehydration worse.

Heat waves, unusually hot weather: Extra caution needs to be taken during unseasonal heat waves or unusually hot or humid weather. In these circumstances athletes lack acclimatization and are at increased risk of heat illness if they exercise at their cool climate intensity.

If any athlete appears distressed or complains of feeling unwell, they should stop exercising.

In warm weather wet sponging will make athletes feel more comfortable.

EMERGENCY PLAN

- Lie the victim down
- Cool by fanning
- Apply wrapped ice packs to groins and armpits
- Loosen and remove excessive clothing
- Give cool water to drink if conscious
- SEEK MEDICAL ASSISTANCE