

Northwest Little League

HEAT, HYDRATION and PERFORMANCE

Types of Heat Illness

- ❖ **Heat cramps** are severe cramping of the skeletal muscles, particularly those most heavily used during exercise. Heat cramps are treated by moving the individual to a cooler location and administering fluids.

Heat cramps symptoms:

- Muscle pain or a feeling of "twinges"
- Spasms.
- Visual evidence that muscles have tightened up.
- Possible nausea and thirst as a result of dehydration.

- ❖ **Heat exhaustion** is a **heat**-related illness that can occur after you've been exposed to high temperatures, and it often is accompanied by dehydration. There are two types of **heat exhaustion**: Water depletion. Signs include excessive thirst, weakness, headache, and loss of consciousness. Salt depletion.

Heat exhaustion symptoms:

- Confusion.
- Dark-colored urine (a sign of dehydration)
- Dizziness.
- Fainting.
- Fatigue.
- Headache.
- Muscle or abdominal cramps.
- Nausea, vomiting, or diarrhea.

- ❖ **Heat Stroke** is the condition marked by fever and often by unconsciousness, caused by failure of the body's temperature-regulating mechanism when exposed to excessively high temperatures.

Heatstroke symptoms:

High body temperature. A body temperature of 104 F (40 C) or higher is the main sign of heatstroke.

- Altered mental state or behavior. ...
- Alteration in sweating. ...
- Nausea and vomiting. ...
- Flushed skin. ...
- Rapid breathing. ...
- Racing heart rate. ...

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The following practices should be observed in order to prevent any form of heat illness:

- ❖ **Drink more fluids** (nonalcoholic), regardless of your activity level. Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink. Warning: If your doctor generally limits the amount of fluid you drink or has you on water pills, ask your doctor how much you should drink while the weather is hot.
- ❖ **Don't drink liquids that contain large amounts of sugar**—these actually cause you to lose more body fluid. Also, avoid very cold drinks, because they can cause stomach cramps.
- ❖ Prevention of heat illness with aerobic conditioning, which provides partial acclimatization to the heat. In order to achieve heat acclimatization, athletes should gradually increase their exposure to hot and/or humid environmental conditions over a period of 10 to 14 days.
- ❖ Hydration should be maintained during training (warm ups) and acclimatization.
- ❖ Clothing and protective gear can increase heat stress. Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose-fitting clothing.
- ❖ Frequent rest periods should be scheduled so that the gear and clothing can be loosened to allow heat loss. During the acclimatization period, it may be advisable to use a minimum of protective gear and clothing and to [practice in T-shirts, shorts, socks and shoes.
- ❖ Protect yourself from the sun by wearing a wide-brimmed hat (also keeps you cooler) and sunglasses and by putting on sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher (the most effective products say "broad spectrum" or "UVA/UVB protection" on their labels).
- ❖ To identify heat stress conditions, regular measurements of environmental conditions are recommended.
- ❖ Dehydration must be avoided. Fluid replacement must be readily available. Athletes should be encouraged to drink as much and as frequently as comfort allows. This includes both before and after practice.
- ❖ If an athlete has any heat symptoms, a parent/guardian **MUST** be contacted and an adult must stay with the athlete until a parent/guardian takes over.