

O'FALLON PANTHERS

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Extreme Heat Policies and Procedures

Last updated July, 2021

OTHS EXTREME HEAT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy will be used to determine how to handle situations when the heat index rises to potentially unsafe levels. This policy will be used to advise on all extra-curricular activities within the Southwestern Conference.

The American Academy of Pediatrics has published a policy statement regarding the heat stress effects on exercising children and adolescents. Results of new research indicate that, contrary to previous thinking, youth do not have less effective thermoregulatory ability, insufficient cardiovascular capacity, or lower physical exertion tolerance compared with adults during exercise in the heat when certain precautions are taken. These include: adequate hydration, proper physical exertion during exercise and sports activities, properly wearing uniforms, clothing, and protective equipment, and appropriate preparation, modification, and monitoring by adults. If these precautions are taken, then most healthy children and adolescents can safely participate in outdoor sports and other physical activities through a wide range of challenging warm to hot climatic weather conditions. *Pediatrics* 2011; 128e741-e747.

GENERAL HEAT POLICIES

In accordance with the American Academy of Pediatrics (*Pediatrics* 2011; 128e741-e747.), the following general guidelines should be followed during extreme heat.

Children and adolescents should be regularly educated on the merits of proper preparation, ample hydration, honest reporting, and effectively managing other factors under their control such as recovery and rest, which will directly affect exercise-heat-tolerance and safety.

Sufficient sanitary and appropriate fluid should be readily accessible and consumed at regular intervals before, during, and after all sports participation and other physical activities to offset sweat loss and maintain adequate hydration while avoiding overdrinking.

Any child or adolescent should avoid or limit exercise, sport participation, or other physical activity in the heat if he or she is currently ill or is recovering from an illness, especially those involving gastrointestinal distress (e.g., vomiting, diarrhea) and/or fever.

Supervisory staff and adults will closely monitor all children and adolescents during sports and other activities for signs and symptoms of heat related illness.

Exercise, sport participation, and other activity should be modified for safety in relation to the degree of environmental heat stress. See the heat index values and procedures below for appropriate guidance.

HEAT INDEX VALUES AND PROCEDURES

HEAT INDEX (HI)

Heat index is an index that combines [air temperature](#) and [relative humidity](#) in an attempt to determine the human-perceived equivalent temperature — “how hot it feels.”

See Attached Chart for the temperature and humidity correlations whose colors are referenced below.

WHITE ZONE UNDER 95 BLUE ZONE BETWEEN 95 – 99

Provide ample amounts of water for all athletes and make sure it is readily available.

Provide ample amounts of water for all athletes and make sure that it is readily available. Allow athletes to consume as much water as desired. Re-check the temperature and humidity every 30 – 45 minutes or as needed to make decisions on games or practices. Have cool down methods available for athletes as needed. Monitor athletes carefully for signs of Heat Illness. Water breaks at a minimum every 20 – 30 minutes.

YELLOW ZONE BETWEEN 100 – 104

Games - When the heat index is between 100 and 104, administrators, coaches, athletic trainers, and officials will work together to allow additional breaks for water and cooling during game play as needed.

Practices –If possible, consider changing practice times to allow for a safer level of play. If practice times can not be altered, then non necessary practice equipment (i.e. shoulder pads, helmets, etc...) should be removed when not needed for safety. Also, consider moving outdoor practices inside if possible. Water breaks at a minimum every 15-20 minutes. White and Blue zones guidelines apply.

RED ZONE GREATER THAN 105 +

When the heat index is at or above 105, all outdoor games and practices should be postponed or suspended until the HI has dropped to an acceptable level for return. The same considerations should be made for indoor activities when A/C is not available.

TESTING METHODS / PROCEDURES

- Use Online or Web-Based Resources
 - This allows you to type in your zip code and check the exact HI for that time and specific recommendations for practices and games.
- Weather.com will be our standard unless an onsite indicator is present.
 - It also allows you to see a timeline and predictions for the HI at your specific zip code.
- WBGT – When using the WBGT, use parameters on the following pages. WBGT is to be used only by professionals trained with the tool.

SOUTHWESTERN HIGH SCHOOL CONFERENCE

EXTREME HEAT POLICY AND PROCEDURES

This policy represents minimum standards that Southwestern Conference member schools should follow for conference competitions. These guidelines will be used by managers or their designees at all Conference events when the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) is above 80 degrees Fahrenheit.

Thirty minutes prior to the start of a conference activity, and again 60 minutes after the start of the activity, temperature and humidity readings will be taken at the site of the activity. Using a Wet Bulb Globe Thermometer is recommended, although a conversion to WBGT can be made from air temperature and relative humidity using chart 2. Record the readings in writing and maintain the information in files of the host school administration.

Use the Table 1 (see below) with an on-site WBGT reading for appropriate exercise modifications during exercising in the heat:

Table 1

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| <p>a. ≤79.9 degrees F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. All sports<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. 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.2. Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration. Coordinate breaks with assigned contest officials.3. Ice-down towels for cooling.4. Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action. <p>b. 80.0-84.5 degrees F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. All sports<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. 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.2. Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes in duration. Coordinate breaks with assigned contest officials.3. Provide cooling stations using methods such as ice towels.4. Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary actionii. Contact sports and activities with additional protective equipment (in addition to the above measures)<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. Helmets and other possible equipment removed while not involved in contact.iii. Reduce time of outside activity. Consider postponing activity to later in the day.iv. Recheck air temperature and humidity every 30 minutes to monitor for increased heat conditions or sooner if personnel on the field suspects potential heat stress. <p>c. 84.6-87.5 degrees F</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">i. All sports<ul style="list-style-type: none">1. 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.2. Schedule at least 4 separate 4:00 breaks within each hour, or a 10:00 break every 30:00 of training or competition.3. Coordinate breaks with assigned contest officials.4. Have cooling stations for before, during, and after exercise/training/competition.5. Watch/monitor athletes carefully for necessary action6. Reduce time of outside activity as well as indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable.7. Consider postponing activity to later in the day or another day (with approval from Athletic Director)8. If practicing, maximum of 2 hours of training/practice while temperature is in this range. |
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