

WEATHER POLICIES

Heat and Hydration

When students are involved in physical activity during practice and competition, they lose fluids and electrolytes through sweat. Sweating is the body's natural cooling mechanism. However, if fluids are not replaced dehydration will occur. Thirst is not a good indicator of fluid needs. Many students come to practice and games already dehydrated due to poor diet, taking medication, or drinking sodas or energy drinks. Physical activity furthers the condition and by the time the student feels thirsty, dehydration has already set in. Even levels of dehydration as little as 1-2% (1.3 - 2.6lbs., for a 130lb student) can lead to premature fatigue and impair physical and mental performance.

The main problem associated with exercising in hot weather is water loss through sweating. Water breaks two or three times per hour are better than one break an hour. The best method is always to have water available and to allow the athlete to drink water whenever they need it. The small amount of water lost in sweat will be replaced by salting food at meals. DO NOT USE SALT TABLETS.

Key Terms and Definitions

Heat Cramps: Muscular pain and spasm due to heavy exertion and dehydration. Heat cramps usually involve the abdominal muscles or legs, and it's generally thought that dehydration is the cause.

Heat Syncope: Weakness, fatigue, and fainting due to loss of salt and water in sweat and exercise in the heat.

Heat Exhaustion: Typically occurs when people exercise heavily or work in a warm, humid environment where body fluids and electrolytes are lost through sweating. Fluid loss causes blood flow to decrease in the vital organs, resulting in a form of shock.

Heat Stroke: This is life threatening. The temperature control system, which produces sweat to cool the body, stops working. The body temperature can rise so high that brain damage and death may result if the body is not cooled quickly. Any heat stroke victim must be cooled quickly and referred for advance medical attention.

Dehydration: When fluid loss exceeds fluid intake.

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT): Temperature index based on the combined effects of air temperature, relative humidity, radiant heat, and air movement.

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Effects of Dehydration

- Dehydration can affect an athlete's performance in less than an hour of exercise. Effects begin sooner if the athlete begins the session dehydrated.
- Dehydration of just 1% - 2% of body weight (only 1.5lbs for a 150lb athlete) can negatively influence performance.
- Dehydration of greater than 3% of body weight increases an athlete's risk of heat illness (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, and heat stroke).

Basic Warning Signs of Dehydration

Thirst Muscle Cramps Irritability Nausea

Headache Weakness Dizziness Decreased Performance

Fluid Guidelines

Before Exercise

- 2 to 3 hours before exercise 17–20oz. Of water or sports drink.
- 10 – 20 minutes before exercise drink another 7-10 oz. Of water or sports drink.

During Exercise

- Drink early – even minimal dehydration compromises performance.
- Drink every 10-20 minutes, at least 7-10 Oz. Of water or sports drink. To maintain hydration, drink beyond your thirst. Optimally, drink fluids based on the amount of sweat and urine loss.

After Exercise

- Within 2 hours drink enough to replace any weight loss from exercise. Drink approximately 20-24oz of a sports drink per pound of weight loss.

Rehydration

- An athlete's hydration status can be monitored by:
- Body weight after exercise vs. Before (weighing in)
- Urine color
- Urine volume

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Practice Guidelines

General Guidelines

- All sports should follow a gradual increase in workout intensity over several days to acclimatize athletes and allow them to become accustomed to heat exposure.
- Unlimited/unrestricted water will be available at all practices.
- Athletes in all sports will always be monitored.
- Asthmatic athletes may remove themselves from workouts without penalty.
- Coaches are responsible for communicating with athletic trainers to ensure that necessary supplies and equipment are available for hydration and cooling during practices.

Football Practice Acclimatization Guidelines (UIL)

- During the first four days, athletes wear only shoes, socks, T-shirt, shorts, and helmets (no shoulder pads).
- All student athletes who arrive after the first day of practice are required to undergo a four-day acclimatization period.
- A detailed explanation of practice guidelines is on the UIL webpage, and coaches must be familiar with them.

Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT)

In 2026, the UIL made **WET BULB GLOBE TEMPERATURE (WBGT)** the mandatory forecast measurement used to monitor environmental conditions during outdoor physical activities. WBGT estimates the effect of temperature, relative humidity, wind speed, and solar radiation using a combination of temperature from three thermometers.

WBGT Modification Guidelines

- WBGT has been shown to provide an accurate measure of environmental heat stress.
- WBGT should be used as a preventive measure during exercise in the heat by making activity modifications as WBGT rises.
- When developing guidelines for activity modification using WBGT, it is necessary to include length of activity, hydration breaks, equipment to be worn, and level at which activity is moved indoors.

- WGBT guidelines must be region (geographic) specific since temperatures fluctuate differently by region. An individual's response to exercising in heat may vary by the geographic region in which their usual exercise sessions take place.
- WGBT modifications should be fluid, meaning that if the conditions get more restrictive, the modifications should be more restrictive. As conditions become milder, the modifications should be less restrictive.

The following chart has been provided by UIL to provide guidance for modifying activity in response to severe heat conditions.

WBGT Activity Guidelines		
Class 3	Class 2	Activity Guidelines
< 82.0	<79.7	Normal Activities - Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 3 min each during the workout.
82.0 - 86.9	79.7 - 84.6	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; Provide at least three separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
87.0 - 90.0	84.7 - 87.6	Maximum practice time is 2 hours; For Football: players are restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. If the WBGT rises to this level during practice, players may continue to work out wearing football pants without changing to shorts. For All Sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour with a minimum duration of 4 min each.
90.1 - 92.0	87.7 - 89.7	Maximum practice time is 1 hour; For Football: No protective equipment may be worn during practice, and there may be no conditioning activities. For All Sports: There must be 20 min of rest breaks distributed throughout the hour of practice.
≥92.1	≥89.8	No outdoor workouts. Delay practices until a cooler WBGT is reached.

**Values in the above chart are WBGT measurements (not temperature or heat index measurements).*

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High School

Unrestricted access to water always

WBGT > 92.1

- No outdoor workout

WBGT > 90.1 - 92.0

- Shorts and T-shirts only
- 30 minutes break every hour
- Conditioning inside
- 1 hour practice limit

WBGT > 87.0 – 90.0

- Shorts, T-shirts, shoulder pads & helmets
- 2-hour practice limit
- 4 rest break – 4 minutes each

WBGT > 82.0 – 86.9

- Conditioning should be without helmets

and shoulder pads

- 3 rest break – 4 minutes each

WBGT < 82.0 - No Restrictions

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Heat Policy

Athletic Trainers will monitor the heat index using Weather Bug/Perry Weather. The following are guidelines for coaches and athletic trainers to help prevent heat-related illnesses and emergencies:

Middle School

Coaches will be responsible for checking Heat Index

Unrestricted access to water at all times

WBGT > 90.1 – 92.0

- No outdoor workout

WBGT > 87.0 - 90.0

- T-shirt and shorts only
- No protective equipment
- No conditioning
- 20-minute breaks every hour
- Maximum practice time: 1 1/2 hours

WBGT > 82.0 – 86.9

- Helmet, shoulder pads and shorts
- All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning
- 10-minute breaks every 30 minutes
- Maximum practice time: 1 1/2 hours

WBGT < 82.0

- No Restrictions

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Competitions & Possible Modifications to Competitions

- WBGT practice guidelines and limitations do not apply to UIL competitions, but it is recommended that schools monitor WBGT conditions prior to and during the game and use appropriate emergency action plans for high temperature and humidity.

On-Site Cooling for Heat Emergency

UIL rules require that a rapid cooling zone be available for all outdoor activities held in WBGT of 82 degrees or greater. Rapid cooling zones should include one or more of the following:

- Immediate availability of ice water immersion using either tubs or tarps.

San Benito High uses tubs located in the showers of locker room A at the stadium and at the tennis courts. The one at the stadium services football, soccer, track, baseball, and softball. The one at tennis services the indoor facility, practice fields, tennis, and band. Twenty gallons of ice is always on the bed of the Gator.

- Shaded area using tents or nearby buildings.
- Locker room A at the stadium has AC and the tennis tub is in the shade.
- Pop up tents are available for activities as needed.
- Cooling fans or misters if available.
- The high school has misting fans that can be deployed if needed.
- Each high school and middle school have multiple hydration systems to deliver unlimited cold water during activities.
- Ice towels or sponges
- Ice towels with spirits of ammonia are available if needed.
- Coaches should be trained in recognizing a heat emergency and administering rapid cooling if needed.

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Cold Water Immersion Policy

The medical standard for determining body core temperature in a heat emergency is rectal temperature. If a rectal thermometer is not available, the following protocol will be followed:

- If a heat emergency is suspected, cooling by ice water immersion should **occur for at least 20 minutes** then transport to the hospital.

Cold Water Immersion Procedure

- Initiate cooling via cold water immersion and or rotating cold wet towels.
- Contact EMS services immediately.
- The patient must be moved to a cooling zone, begin appropriate treatment, and continuously monitor the patient.
- Excess clothing shall be removed to aid cooling.
- If removal of clothing and/or equipment would cause delays of 5+ minutes, do not remove and initiate cooling.
- Place patient in a cold water (35-59°F) tub up to the neck.
- Wrap a towel across the chest and beneath both arms to prevent the athlete from sliding into the tub.
- Ice shall be added after the athlete is immersed.
- Water shall be continuously and vigorously stirred to maximize cooling.
- A cold wet towel will be placed over the head/neck and rewet and replaced every 2 minutes.
- Cooling shall cease around the 20-minute mark then EMS can transport.



Must be set up:

Designated shaded area on campus near field

Designated area at the Stadium sites



Proper set-up includes:

A tub half-filled with water.

Minimum of two 10-gallon water coolers with ice next to the tub ready for treatment.

Misting fan, ice towels/sponges.

Drinking water. Water coolers or water cows, water bottles and/or cups.

Treatment table to administer care to an injured athlete.

Completion of set-up within 5-10 minutes prior to the practice/competition/event site.



Cool First, Transport Second

When a patient is diagnosed with EHS, the principle of Cool First, Transport Second will be used.

