

Fayetteville Public Schools Athletic Department

Weather Guidelines

Hot Weather

Practice or competition in hot and humid environmental conditions poses special problems for student-athletes. Heat stress and resulting heat illness is a primary concern in these conditions. Although deaths from heat illness are rare, constant surveillance and education are necessary to prevent heat-related problems. The following practices should be observed.

General Considerations for Risk Reductions

1. Encourage proper education regarding heat illnesses (for athletes, coaches, parents, medical staff, etc.) Education about risk factors should focus on hydration needs, acclimatization, work/rest ration, signs and symptoms of exertional heat illnesses, treatment, dietary supplements, nutritional issues, and fitness status.
2. Assure that onsite medical staff has authority to alter work/rest ratios, practice schedules, amount of equipment, and withdrawal of individuals from participation based on environment and/or athlete's medical conditions.

General Guidelines:

1. Gradual acclimatization of the athlete to hot/humid conditions is a must. We advise that student-athletes should gradually increase exposure to hot and/or humid environmental conditions over a period of 7 to 10 days to achieve acclimatization.
2. Clothing and protective gear can increase heat stress. Dark colors absorb solar radiation, clothing, and protective gear interfere with the evaporation of sweat and other avenues of heat loss. During acclimatization process, student athletes should practice in T-shirts, shorts, socks, and shoes. Rubberized suits should never be worn.
3. To identify heat stress conditions on the field of play, regular measurements including ambient temperature and relative humidity will be taken 30 minutes prior to practice and every 30 minutes throughout practice if necessary. The website below includes a heat index table. Use this table to assess the heat index.

<http://www.weatherimages.org/data/heatindex.html>

4. Unlimited access to drinking water will be provided throughout practices and competitions.

Specific Guidelines

Heat index of less than 100:

- Water breaks every 30-45 min.

Heat index of 100-105:

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 30 min.
 - Break duration 1 period (5 min.)
- Shorts/shirts/helmets
 - Water breaks every 40 min.
- Cardiovascular Conditioning: remove helmets

Heat index of 106-110:

Football

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 20 min.
 - Practice will not exceed 1 hr. 45 min.
- Shorts/shoulder pads/helmets
 - Water breaks every 30 min.
 - Practice will not exceed 2 hr.
- Athletes allowed to remove helmets while not in contact with drills.
- Cardiovascular Conditioning: remove shoulder pads and helmets.

Cross Country/Men's and Women's Track

- Long Distance runners must be directly supervised by coaches at all times.
- Water breaks every 30 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.
- Track and Field athletes--Water breaks every 30 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.

Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Tennis and Off - season Programs

- Water breaks every 30 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.
- Off season programs: 45 min. total of heat exposure with a minimum of 1 water break

Heat Index of 111-115:

Football

- Shorts/Shoulder Pads/Helmets only
 - Water breaks every 20 min.
 - Practice not to exceed 2 hr. total
- Cardiovascular Conditioning duration and intensity decreased.
 - Remove shoulder pads and helmet

Cross Country/Men's and Women's Track

- Long Distance runners must be directly supervised by coaches at all times.
- Water breaks every 20 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.

Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Tennis, and Off-Season Programs

- Water breaks every 20 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.
- Off-season programs: 30 min. total heat exposure with a minimum of 1 water break

Heat Index 116-117:

Football

- Shorts/Shirts/Helmets only
 - Water breaks every 20 min.
 - Practice not to exceed 1 hr. 30 min. total
- **NO** Cardiovascular Conditioning

Cross Country/Men's and Women's Track

- Long Distance runners must be directly supervised by coaches at all times
- Water breaks every 15 min.
- Practice will not exceed 1 hr. 30 min.

Baseball, Softball, Soccer, Tennis and Off-Season Programs

- Water breaks every 20 min.
- Practice will not exceed 2 hr.
- Off-Season Programs: 30 min. total heat exposure with a minimum of 1 water break.

Heat Index of 118-120:

All sports:

- No outside practice will be allowed in any sport

Junior High Athletics:

Guidelines to follow:

Heat index of less than 100:

- Water breaks every 30-45 min.

Heat index of 100-106:

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 20 min.
 - Practice will not exceed 1 hr. 30 min.
- Shorts/should pads/ helmets
 - Water breaks every 30 min.
 - Practice will not exceed 1 hr. 45 min.
- Athletes allowed to remove helmets while not in contact with drills.
- Cardiovascular Conditioning: remove shoulder pads and helmets.
 - Decrease duration and intensity

Heat index of 106-110:

Football

- Shorts/Shoulder Pads/Helmets only
 - Water breaks every 15 min.
 - Practice not to exceed 1 hr. 30 min. total
 - No cardiovascular conditioning

NO outside practice when temperature exceeds 109 F and/or heat index is 111 F.

Cold Weather

Cold exposure can be uncomfortable, impair performance and even become life threatening. Conditions created by cold exposure include frostbite and hypothermia. Wind chill can make

activity uncomfortable and can impair performance when muscle temperature declines. Frostbite is the freezing of superficial tissues, usually of the face, ears, fingers, and toes. Hypothermia a significant drop in body temperature occurs with rapid cooling, exhaustion and energy depletion. The resulting failure to the temperature-regulating mechanisms constitutes a medical emergency.

Hypothermia frequently occurs at temperatures above freezing. A wet and windy 30-50 F degree exposure be as serious as a subzero exposure. For this reason, Fayetteville Public Schools is developing cold weather guidelines using the wind chill factor instead of the ambient temperature. See website for a wind chill factor chart.

www.mste.uiuc.edu/dildine/wind_chill

Wind speed interacts with ambient temperature to significantly increase body cooling. When the body and clothing are wet (whether from sweat, rain, snow, or immersion), the cooling is even more pronounced due to the evaporation of the water held close to the skin by the wet clothing.

Clothing is one of the most important parts of keeping the athlete's body warm. Athletes should dress in layers and try to stay as dry as possible. Layers can be added or removed depending on temperature, activity and wind chill. Athletes should layer themselves with wicking fabric next to the body, followed by lightweight pile or wool layers for warmth. Athletes should use a wind block garment to avoid wind chill during workouts. Heat loss from the head and neck may be as much as 50% of total heat loss, therefore, for the head and neck should be covered during cold conditions. Other extremities should be covered at all times to protect from the wind chill.

Cold Exposure:

- Breathing of cold air can trigger an asthma attack
- Coughing, chest tightness, burning sensation in throat and nasal passage
- Reduction of strength, power, endurance, and aerobic capacity

- Core body temperature reduction, causing reduction of motor output

Cold Recognition:

- Shivering is a means for the body to generate heat
- Excessive shivering contributes to fatigue, loss of motor skills
- Numbness and pain in fingers, toes, ears, and exposed facial tissue
- Drop in core temperature; athlete exhibits sluggishness, slowed speech, disoriented

General Guideline:

- Wind Chill Factor will be assessed prior to practices

HIGH SCHOOL ATHLETIC COLD WEATHER GUIDELINES: PRACTICE PROTOCOL

Wind Chill Factor 33-35 F with Precipitation:

- 35 min. of exposure/20 min. inside gym (may return outside after 20 min.)
- Dry clothing (socks, gloves)
- Athletes must be dressed in warm-up with extremities covered

Wind Chill Factor 31-32 F (Dry):

- 45 min. exposure/ 15 min. inside gym (may return outside after 15 min.)
- Athletes must be in warm-ups with extremities covered

Wind Chill Factor 32 F or lower with precipitation:

- All practices will be inside
- No outside exposure

Wind Chill Factor 30 F (Dry):

- 30 min. of total exposure to chill factor
- 15 min. inside
- Warm-ups must be worn with all extremities covered at all times

Wind Chill Factor of 25 F or lower:

- No outside practices
- All work must be inside

Junior High Athletic Cold Weather Guidelines:

Wind Chill Factor less than 45 F with participation:

- 35 min. of exposure 20/min inside gym (may return outside after 20 min.)
- Dry clothing (socks, gloves)
- Athletes must be dressed in warm-up with extremities covered

Wind Chill Factor less than 35 F:

- All practices inside

Administrative Regulation: Outdoor Competition Cold Weather

Games to be postponed due to cold weather will be determined on a case by case basis by the Fayetteville Public Schools Administration.

Postponed games to be re-scheduled will be determined by the Head Coach of that sport as well as the Athletic Director or Assistant Athletic Director. An outside athletic event date will be considered for rescheduling if the following occurs:

- ❖ Wind chill reaches 25 degrees or less, with precipitation
- ❖ Wind chill is less than 20 degrees, without precipitation

Air Quality Index Policy

Air Quality Index

Good: Code Green

Guidelines to Follow

No action taken

Moderate: Code Yellow

No limit to exercise, but watch those that may be affected: Asthma

Unhealthy for Sensitive Groups: Code Orange

2 ½ hr. practice limit, but watch those that may be affected: Asthma

Unhealthy: Code Red

2 hr. practice limit, but watch those that may be affected: Asthma

Very Unhealthy: Code Purple

1 ½ hr. practice limit, but watch those that may be affected: Asthma