GREATER MONCTON

GMFA

FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION

Safety-Leadership-Teamwork

HEAT SAFETY PROTOCOL

Heat Safety Protocol

The following scale is to be used to determine what limitations are imposed on athletic activities. In game situations, the activation of Heat Safety Protocols will be a collaborative decision between the coaches and officials on the field.

Relative Humidity	Air Temperature	Practice/Game Protocols
Under 70%	Under 23°C	No limitations
Over 70%	20° - 23°C	Shortened practices with water breaks and minimum pads
Under 70%	22° - 25°C	
Over 70%	22° - 25°C	Restricted practice with numerous water breaks and no helmets or pads
Any value	Over 26°C	Suspend practice

Signs and Symptoms

Heat Cramps	Involuntary muscle spasms; usually (but not always) located in the calf
Heat Exhaustion	Throbbing headache, nausea, vomiting, chills, dizziness or light-headedness, rapid pulse, cool and clammy skin, pale skin color, excessive sweating
Heat Stroke (Medical Emergency)	Disorientation, slurred speech, confusion or aggressive behaviour, unconsciousness, dry skin*, flushed/hot skin, rapid/pounding pulse ***absence of sweat is highly suggestive of heat related illness, but sweating may be present as well****

Athletes will be instructed to remove themselves from any activity if they feel overheated. If an athlete has any symptoms of heat related illness, they will be removed from any athletic activity and given reasonable and prudent immediate care by the First Responder designate of the team. The athlete's parent/guardian will be notified and advised to contact their physician or go to the local emergency room if symptoms persist or worsen.

An athlete with any heat related illness who is removed from the athletic activity will be re-evaluated by the First Responder designate of the team prior to being allowed to return to the field. The coach will verify the athlete's status prior to allowing them to return to play. It is the responsibility of every coach on the field to adhere to the practice limitations once the Heat Safety Protocol has been activated to ensure the safety of all athletes, coaches, officials, and volunteers.

Prevention of Heat Related Illness

1. Allow unlimited access to water/fluids at all practices and games;
2. Watch players who have a high body fat; they may be working harder to achieve the same results;
3. Watch players who have smaller bodies; they have less surface area to get rid of heat;
4. Watch the very young (prepubertal); their sweating mechanism is not fully developed;
5. Watch those with more clothing/equipment; the heat is trapped against their bodies;
6. Encourage athletes to drink fluids at the same rate that they lost them (work hard; drink more);
7. Talk to athletes and on-field volunteers in preseason about prevention of heat related illness;
8. Encourage the athletes to check their urine; dark (apple juice) urine is potentially dehydrated
9. Watch players who are new to sport; athletes who are in poor physical condition are at higher risk;
10. Athletes who have been ill or are recovering from an illness are at greater risk;
11. Athletes should be instructed/reminded to stay hydrated; by the time you are thirsty it is too late;
12. Water is the best hydration fluid; sports drinks are typically only required during long-term activities;
13. Athletes should be reminded to avoid drinks high in sugar (pop); slow to absorb;
14. Athletes should be reminded to avoid caffeinated beverages (coffee, soda); can act as a diuretic.