

CIRCULAR



PERTH FOOTBALL
L E A G U E

Subject: Heat Management

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Audience: Club Committees

Summary: Heat Management training nights and scratch matches.	Action: Please read and forward to all coaches and support staff.
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As clubs train and play in preparation for the coming season we are mindful of player safety in extreme heat conditions and have provided a management guide for clubs to use should the need arise.

HEAT MANAGEMENT

Heat-related stress can lead to impaired player performance (eg dizziness, headaches, collapse and illness). In its extreme form, heat can be life threatening. Preventing heat stress and injury maintains optimum performance and improves recovery. To prevent heat stress, careful planning and preparation is required.

A number of management strategies to minimise any potential heat injury have been identified over recent seasons and some recommended prevention methods are as follows:

Preliminary Assessment

The League will assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology. Heat stress management strategies should also be applied at all training sessions.

Players / Umpires

Players have a responsibility to ensure that the impact of environmental factors such as extreme heat is not exacerbated by their own conduct. Accordingly, the following general guidelines should be followed:

- Ensure adequate fluid intake prior to game and during game (500-700mls per quarter);
- monitor hydration;
- notify medical and coaching staffs when effected by heat or when performance is noticeably effected;
- Use water and electrolyte drinks;
- use pre-game, game and post-game cooling strategies;
- do not play in the heat with an illness; and
- Apply 50+ sunscreen in sunny conditions.

Clubs Responsibility

All clubs should monitor environmental factors such as extreme heat both in matches and at any training session administered by the club.

The club should assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Heat stress management strategies should also be applied at all training sessions administered by the club.

The following general guidelines should be followed:

- Use cooling aids – ice vests, spray bottles, sponges, fans (in rooms and on interchange bench) and shade;
- Choose heat permeable jumpers and socks;
- Use a club official to be delegated the primary responsibility of monitoring and manage players for heat stress issues as they arise during a match;
- Provide adequate fluids in appropriate bottles;
- Ensure trainers are fit enough to access as many players as possible during the game;
- Provide facilities for player cooling – shade, air conditioning, sprays and fans whether training or playing;
- Coordinate training times outside extreme conditions;
- Play additional players in matches;

Coaches

- Rotate players regularly, especially running players, through interchange bench

Medical

- Identify “at risk” players and monitor their core temperatures, physical and mental performance and hydration state;
- Do not play players suffering from a febrile illness, vomiting or diarrhea;
- Weigh players before the game, half time and at the end of the game to identify fluid replacement requirements;
- Avoid adrenaline-like medication;
- If playing in potentially difficult circumstances delegate management of heat stress and illness to one (1) responsible medical officer;
- Have adequate medical equipment available for managing heat stress conditions;
- Provide player education on the issue and how the club will manage such circumstances.

PERTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE

Where possible, the League should schedule matches as much to avoid extremes of heat and allow for increased recovery from those conditions.

- Schedule games to avoid hot conditions where possible (e.g. pre-season games – night or twilight or early morning) particularly night games in March/April.
- Ensure venues provide change rooms with cooling facilities e.g. fans, air conditioning.
- Increase the number of water runners to run fluids in high risk conditions (extra three)
- Increase the length of intervals to enable teams to leave the field for the shade of the rooms at each change in high risk conditions i.e. 25 minutes for ½ time and/or 10 minutes for ¼ and ¾ time.
- Provide extra field and boundary umpires for February and March games (pre-season competition) in high to extreme risk conditions.
- Clubs can select two extra players for home and away fixtures.
- Reduce length of quarters in extreme risk conditions.
- Consider postponing or rescheduling games in extreme risk conditions.