



LEHIGH ATHLETICS

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Heat Exposure Policy

While life threatening situations are rare in athletics, serious consequences can result from heat stroke. With prevention being the major goal of Sports Medicine and the Athletics Department, it is important certain safeguards are met to ensure the safety of our student-athletes.

During times of hot weather, a member of the Sports Medicine Staff will determine air temperature and relative humidity utilizing the sling psychrometer. This device will be used in conjunction with local heat index information available on The Weather Channel website. Even when a particular sport has athletic trainer coverage, it is in the best interest of the head coach to obtain information pertaining to heat/humidity and follow appropriate procedures for each zone or risk.

Temperature (°F)

	80	82	84	86	88	90	92	94	96	98	100	102	104	106	108	110
40	80	81	83	85	88	91	94	97	101	105	109	114	119	124	130	136
45	80	82	84	87	89	93	96	100	104	109	114	119	124	130	137	
50	81	83	85	88	91	95	99	103	108	113	118	124	131	137		
55	81	84	86	89	93	97	101	106	112	117	124	130	137			
60	82	84	88	91	95	100	105	110	116	123	129	137				
65	82	85	89	93	98	103	108	114	121	128	136					
70	83	86	90	95	100	105	112	119	126	134						
75	84	88	92	97	103	109	116	124	132							
80	84	89	94	100	106	113	121	129								
85	85	90	96	102	110	117	126	135								
90	86	91	98	105	113	122	131									
95	86	93	100	108	117	127										
100	87	95	103	112	121	132										

Likelihood of Heat Disorders with Prolonged Exposure or Strenuous Activity

■ Caution
 ■ Extreme Caution
 ■ Danger
 ■ Extreme Danger

"Extreme Caution" – Special observation and consideration should be given to student-athletes susceptible to heat problems (i.e. overweight, underweight due to water loss, history of previous heat injury). Cold water should be accessible before, during, and after activity.

"Danger" – We strongly encourage several 5-10 minute rest/water breaks for activity lasting over one hour (maximum of 30 minutes between breaks). It is recommended practice should be conducted during the coolest part of the day (before 10 am and after 4 pm). Practice intensity should be light with student-athletes wearing loose, light colored clothing.

"Extreme Danger" – We strongly encourage providing unlimited water breaks every 15 minutes. Practice intensity and duration should be decreased. Practice should be conducted in shorts with no equipment. Consider postponing the practice or event.

Student-athletes are required to be weighed before and after each practice during times of hot weather (i.e. August preseason; early fall). Losses of 3 to 5% of body weight after practice indicates dehydration. Student-athletes will need to return to their pre-practice weight before the next practice. If pre-practice weight is not achieved, the student-athlete will not be allowed to participate or must be closely supervised by the Sports Medicine staff in order to monitor for signs and symptoms of potential heat illness (see Table 1). Weight charts and scales will be provided by the Sports Medicine Staff. Coaches must take responsibility for implementation of weight checks and daily evaluation of weight charts.

Coaches are one of the most motivating influences on a student-athlete. When demands are placed upon young student-athletes, coaching instructions may be interpreted differently than intended. Sometimes, an unconditioned student-athlete who is encouraged to lose weight may try to lose it all in the first week of practice. This results in dehydration, electrolyte imbalance, and susceptibility to heat stress. Therefore, it is crucial for the coach to support and follow the guidelines set forth by the Sports Medicine Staff.

Table 1

Vital Sign	Heat Exhaustion	Heat Stroke
FACE	Pale	Red, Flushed
SKIN	Moist, Clammy	Hot, Dry
SWEATING	Profuse	None
TEMPERATURE	Normal (98.6 or slightly higher)	Extremely high (106-110)
PULSE	Weak and Rapid	Strong and Rapid
CONSCIOUSNESS	usually conscious	Possibly unconscious, headache a usual symptom
BREATHING	Rapid, shallow	Possible convulsions/ Rapid, shallow
TREATMENT/ FIRST AID	Move to a cool area. Recline with feet elevated. Ice or cold compresses. Electrolyte solution. Hospital or Doctor evaluation	Lower body core temperature immediately! Recline with head elevated. No stimulants Undress/cold towels or ice/medical emergency transport