



QUEENSLAND GIRLS
Secondary Schools
Sports Association

Hot Weather Policy

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Established 1908 - Performance, Participation, Tradition & Innovation

QGSSSA HOT WEATHER/ENVIRONMENT GUIDELINES

All officials, coaches, managers, captains, umpires and supervising volunteers should take all reasonable steps to minimise risk of injury due to extreme heat.

To assist member schools, QGSSSA has developed this guideline to inform of this risk and suggest a range of appropriate response measures.

General Risk

High intensity exercise in a hot environment (indoor and outdoor), with associated fluid loss and elevated body temperature, can lead to: Dehydration, Heat Exhaustion and Heat Stroke.

Temperature

Ambient temperature is the most easily understood guide available, and is most useful on hot, dry days.

AMBIENT TEMPERATURE	RELATIVE HUMIDITY	RISK OF HEAT ILLNESS	POSSIBLE MANAGEMENT FOR SUSTAINED PHYSICAL ACTIVITY
15 – 20		Low	Heat illness can occur in distance running. Caution over-motivation.
21 – 25	Exceeds 70%	Low-moderate	Increase vigilance. Caution over-motivation.
26 – 30	Exceeds 60%	Moderate	Moderate early pre-season training. Reduce intensity and during of play/training. Take more breaks.
31 – 35	Exceeds 50%	High – very high	Uncomfortable for most people. Limit intensity, take more breaks. Limit duration to less than 60 minutes per session.
36 and above	Exceeds 30%	Extreme	Very stressful for most people. Postpone to cooler condition (or cooler part of the day) or cancellation.

The Bureau of Meteorology produced ambient and WBGT reading for many locations in Australia. These readings and a guide for the relative risk for your location are available at <http://www.bom.gov.au/>

N.B. It is important to watch for unusual “heatwave” conditions or variation from the average temperature for the time of year. This is one situation where there may be a greater danger of heat illness.

Heat stress increases with increase in air temperature but be aware that there are not clear demarcations in risk between temperature rangers. At relative humidity levels above those indicated in the tables, stress increases markedly.

Dehydration

Fluid loss occurs during exercise, mainly due to perspiration and respiration. It makes an athlete more susceptible to fatigue and muscle cramps. Inadequate fluid replacement before, during and after exercise will lead to excessive dehydration and may then lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat Exhaustion

Dehydration can lead to heat exhaustion; symptoms include:

- Fatigue, high heart rate, light-headedness, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance/skill, confusion and nausea.
- Athletes will pass little urine, which will be highly concentrated.
- Cramps may be associated with dehydration.

To avoid heat exhaustion, if people feel unwell during the exercise, they should immediately cease activity and rest. Further benefit comes if the rest is in a shaded area with some passing breeze (from a fan if necessary) and the person takes extra hydration. Misting or spraying with water can also help.

Heat Stroke

Severe dehydration may lead to heat stroke; symptoms include:

- Similar to heat exhaustion but with dry skin, confusion and collapse.
- Heat stroke may arise in an athlete who has not been identified as suffering from heat exhaustion and has persisted in further activity.

Heat stroke is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately by a medical professional. It should be assumed that any collapsed athletes are at danger of heat stroke.

MEASURES TO MINIMISE HEAT RISKS

Hydration

It is recommended that competitors, referees and active officials are advised to consume

- At least 500mls (2-3 glasses) before activity
- 200mls (1-2 glasses) every 15 minutes during activity, preferably water, however diluted cordial or sports drinks may be appropriate
- During exercise longer than 60 minutes, 500-700ml of cool water or sports drink are sufficient for most sports.
- After exercise, replenish fluid deficit to ensure that full rehydration, but not over-hydrated.

Conditions

The combination of extreme environmental conditions and sustained vigorous exercise is particularly hazardous for athletes. The greater the intensity of the exercise, the greater the risk of heat-related symptoms. Measures to be considered include:

- Increase player and official rotations
- Reducing the playing time and extending rest periods with opportunities to rehydrate during the event
- Dividing games into shorter playing periods rather than halves to allow for extra breaks
- Provision of extra water for wetting face, clothes and hair
- Provision of additional shade structure for outdoor sport

- A fan to enhance air movement
- Avoid the hottest part of the day when possible

Clothing

It is essential that all QGSSSA attendees (including competitors, students, officials, volunteers, staff, and referees) are made aware of the importance of:

- Wearing appropriate clothing during play/ events
- Wearing hats or visors whilst not competing or where suitable during an event (or whilst supervising, officiating or spectating)
- Appropriate application and re-application of SPF 30+ sunscreen
- The use of wet towels, spray bottles and cold packs
- Wearing sunglasses

Predisposed Medical Conditions

It is important to know if athletes, umpires, officials or volunteers have a medical condition or are taking medication that may predispose them to heat illness.

Examples of illness that will put the participant or official at a higher risk of heat include asthma, diabetes, pregnancy, heart conditions and epilepsy.

Other Considerations

- Competitors must be made aware that they should "listen to their bodies" and not be afraid to make the referee/ official or their coach aware of any heat symptoms being suffered by themselves or another competitor.
- Coaches, umpires and officials should be aware of possible heat risks and carefully monitor all competitors. If any competitor show signs of heat symptoms swift and appropriate action should be taken
- Coaches, umpires and officials need to appreciate that children/ adolescents are less experienced and aware of possible consequences of ignoring heat symptoms. In deciding whether to take precautionary action, coaches, umpires or officials need to take careful consideration of the circumstances rather than merely relying on a competitor's assurance that they are "okay".
- Be aware that younger players are more susceptible to heat injury
- Ensure there are sufficient shaded areas at venues
- In extreme heat conditions, ensure there are qualified trainers/first aiders at the venue

Hot Weather Policy

On days where the temperature is forecast to be extremely hot (in excess of 36°C), consideration by the QGSSSA Executive Officer (and if necessary, in conjunction with members of the QGSSSA Executive) will be given to cancelling the games scheduled.

The following complementary conditions would also need to exist for a decision to cancel be taken

- Overall duration of the event exceeds 1 hour
- Individual intensity during the event is sustained effort with few breaks
- Athletic ability of individuals is generally moderate
- Time between available drinks is longer than 30 minutes
- Time of the event occurs between 11am and 3pm
- Venue is outdoors

- Lack of suitable shade for athletes
- Water not freely available
- Sports medicine official not available

VERSION CONTROL TABLE			
VERSION CONTROL	DATE EFFECTIVE	APPROVED BY	AMMENDMENT
1	December 2007	Executive	Initial policy document
2	February 2019	Executive	
3	November 2022	Executive	Additional information regarding temperatures, predisposed medical conditions and minimising heat risk