

BC Soccer Extreme Heat Guidelines
 June 24, 2021

Participant health and safety is a high priority for BC Soccer; thus, it is recommended to err on the side of caution if ever in doubt in any situation regarding the health and safety of participants.

These guidelines:

1. Serve as a guidance for member organizations, affiliates, team officials, players, and match officials (registered referees) of BC Soccer.
2. Suggests what members, affiliates, match officials (registered referees) and team officials should consider in assessing Extreme Heat Events (EHE) at local fields and awareness of potential health impacts, and
3. Provide additional information about the Extreme Heat, Preventative Measures & Potential Risk.

Guidelines

1. Step 1 – Determine Location
 Go to <https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca> and find your specific location.
2. Step 2 – Determine Temperature (Projected Temperature)
 Check the current temperature with specific focus on the “feels like” temperature which accounts for the humidity in measuring temperature
3. Step 3 – Review the EHE Activity Chart (below) for appropriate Activity Modifications.

Extreme Heat Events (EHE) Activity Chart

Humidex Value	Discomfort at rest	Risk of overhaeting during exercise	Activity Modification
Below 24 C	None	Low	N/A
25C to 29C	None	Low to Moderate	N/A
30C to 34C	Some	Moderate - Athletes should be monitored	Games - Drink Breaks every 30 Minutes
35C to 39C	High	High - Athletes should be monitored closely	Games - consider reduced game length, re-schedule kick-off or cancellation
40C +	EXTREME	EXTREME	ALL ACTIVITY CANCELLED

4. Step 4 – Games, Tournament Play, Training and Practices

Where possible, matches should be scheduled for cooler times of the day.

- Playing in hot conditions both increases the risk of heat illness and impairs performance. Event organizers should attempt to organize matches at a time where less heat stress and exposure is expected. They should reschedule matches where the heat stress is extreme.

Important notes related to game play:

- the match official (registered referee) reserves the final right to cancel the game if the conditions are considered dangerous, in their opinion.

- Referee to write on game sheet reason for an abandonment with EHE Humidity Value, time & date and number calculated.
- If temperature increases dramatically during a game referees and team officials are advised to use their discretion. Record all decisions and relevant information on the game sheet.

Important notes related to training and practices:

- Team Officials should consider if the conditions are considered dangerous and if so, reschedule practice or postponing practice until a later time.
- If temperature increases dramatically during training or a practice, Team Officials are advised to use their discretion and be responsible.
- Team Officials should have an Emergency Action Plan that is shared with all participants ([see link here for template](#)).
 - o Team Officials are encouraged to complete the [NCCP Emergency Action Plan e-learning activity](#) on creating and using an Emergency Action Plan (EAP).

Laws of the Game Allowance

Law 7 within the Laws of the Game allowance for medical stoppages permitted by competition rules, e.g. ‘drinks’ breaks and ‘cooling’ breaks.

Definitions in Law:

- ‘Drinks’ break – Competition rules may allow ‘drinks’ breaks (of no more than one minute) for players to rehydrate; these are different from ‘cooling’ breaks
- ‘Cooling’ break – In the interests of player welfare and safety, competition rules may allow, in certain weather conditions (high humidity and temperatures), ‘cooling’ breaks (usually ninety seconds to three minutes) to allow the body’s temperature to fall; these are different from ‘drinks’ breaks

Preventive Measures

Lightweight, breathable clothing is needed when training and playing in hot conditions.

- This type of clothing allows evaporative cooling to occur (evaporation of sweat). Heavier items of clothing can limit heat loss through this source

Ensuring players are hydrated.

- Importantly even well-hydrated players can be affected by heat illness.
- Rule of thumb: when playing or training, drinking at least 500 ml for every 20 lbs of body weight is recommended. Thus, someone weighing 140 lbs should drink at least 3500 ml of fluid per day.

Other factors to consider in determining risk include (but are not limited to):

Not being acclimatized	Fitness Level (Unfit)
Hypo hydration	Hyper hydration
Use of a variety of medications or supplements	Persons with persistent, disabling mental illness
Certain medical conditions (cardiac, lung)	

Early warning signs to consider include (but are not limited to):

Flushed face	Hyperventilation or shortness of breath
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Headache
Tingling arms
Chilliness
Confusion, agitation, uncooperativeness

Dizziness
Goose bumps (hair on arms standing on end)
Poor coordination

Potential Risks of Extreme Heat Events (Heat Exposure)

Heat Cramps - these are the mildest form of heat trauma, commonly related to low body sodium and chloride levels.

- Signs & Symptoms include weakness, muscle cramps, collapse with low blood pressure.
- Treatment is aimed at replacing the salt loss and can be oral or by intravenous if vomiting is a problem. Having athletes put a little extra salt on their food the day before and day of game can be a helpful way to avoid this condition.

Heat Exhaustion - this is a more severe medical event as follows.

- Signs & Symptoms include weakness, irritability, collapse, unable to sweat adequately to promote body cooling, may proceed in the more ominous heat stroke and a fine rash is often present.
- Treatment is to remove athlete to a cooler environment, use ice baths, fans.

Heat Stroke - THIS IS A MEDICAL EMERGENCY - it is due to a failure of the heat-controlling mechanism. It may occur merely as a result of exposure to heat.

- Signs & Symptoms include mental confusion, headache, poor coordination, delirium, convulsions and death. The body temperature may be 106 F or 40.5 C or higher, the skin is usually hot and dry as the sweating mechanism has failed.
- Treatment - Call 911 and transport to a local Hospital. Rapid cooling is the goal using wet towels, spray mist, sponge baths and removal from the heat. This condition could cause the athlete to go into shock and coma may follow so immediate medical attention is required.

Safe Sport Statement

BC Soccer believes that everyone involved in soccer has the right to participate in safe and inclusive environments free of abuse, harassment, discrimination, and to enjoy the sport at whatever level or capacity they participate in. The welfare of everyone involved in soccer is the foremost consideration and in particular, the protection of children in the sport is the responsibility of everyone involved.

About BC Soccer

Established in 1904, BC Soccer is the largest provincial sports organization (PSO) in BC and the third largest soccer-specific PSO in Canada with over 150,000 participants, consisting of registered players, coaches, referees, administrators and soccer leaders. As a professional not-for-profit society and a member of Canada Soccer, BC Soccer is committed to providing the widest opportunities for existing and potential participants, as well as provide support in the most effective and appropriate way for current players, parents, volunteers, member clubs, leagues, and districts.

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