Alberta Soccer Extreme Heat Event (EHE) Activity Guide

This document is meant to serve as a guideline for Affiliated Members, Team Officials, Players and Match Officials affiliated with Alberta Soccer. As a guideline, it suggests what Affiliated Members, match officials and team officials should consider in assessing Extreme Heat Events (EHE) at local fields and awareness of potential health impacts.

Affiliated Members (Districts) have the right to cancel all sanctioned soccer activity for their respective members based on their assessment of Extreme Heat Events.

Decision Making Steps at Field

1. **Step 1**
   a. Go to https://www.theweathernetwork.com/ca and find your specific location.

2. **Step 2**
   a. Check the current temperature with specific focus on the "feels like" temperature which accounts for the humidity in measuring temperature.

3. **Step 3**
   a. It is the responsibility of the respective coaches to monitor local temperatures and consult with the Match Official to determine the status of the Game and activity modification**

The Match Official reserves the right to cancel a match based on their assessment of the Extreme Heat Event Activity Guide

4. **Step 4**
   a. Review the EHE Activity Chart 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	Drink Breaks should be considered
30C to 34C	Some	Moderate - Athletes should be monitored	Drink Breaks OR Cooling Breaks midway through each half
35C to 39C	High	High - Athletes should be monitored closely	Cooling Breaks midway through each half AND consider reduced game length or cancellation
40C +	EXTREME	EXTREME	ALL ACTIVITY CANCELLED

Laws of the Game Explanation (Drink Breaks & Cooling Breaks)

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:

1. Drinks break – Competition rules may allow 'drinks' breaks (of no more than one minute) for players to rehydrate; these are different from 'cooling' breaks

2. 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

Field Conditions

1. Natural (Grass) Fields
    a. The temperature should be consistent with what is assessed using the decision-making steps

2. Synthetic (Turf) Fields
    a. Synthetic (Turf) Fields absorb heat and the field level temperature will be hotter than the posted temperature.
    b. If playing on synthetic (turf) fields coaches and match officials should assess this impact and modify activity accordingly.

Preventive Measures

1. Where possible, matches should be scheduled for cooler times of the day.
    a. 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.
    b. If tournaments are being played in moderate or high conditions there should be consideration to reduced match length AND a minimum amount of rest (recommended 3 hours) between matches.

2. Lightweight, breathable clothing is needed when training and playing in hot conditions.
    a. This type of clothing allows evaporative cooling to occur (evaporation of sweat). Heavier items of clothing can limit heat loss through this source

3. Ensuring that players are hydrated is an important strategy.
    a. It is, however, essential to recognize that even well-hydrated players can be affected by heat illness

Other factors to consider in determining risk include, but are not limited to;

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

Early warning signs to consider include but are not limited to;

Flushed face
Headache
Tingling arms
Chilliness
Confusion, agitation, uncooperativeness
Hyperventilation or shortness of breath
Dizziness
Goose bumps (hair on arms standing on end)
Poor coordination

Potential Risks of Extreme Heat Events (Heat Exposure)

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

    a. Signs & Symptoms include - weakness, muscle cramps, collapse with low blood pressure.

    b. 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.

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

    a. Signs & Symptoms include - weakness, irritability, collapse, unable to sweat adequately to promote body cooling, my proceed in the more ominous heat stroke and a fine rash is often present.

    b. Treatment - remove athlete to a cooler environment, use ice baths, fans.

3. 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.

    a. 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.

    b. 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.