

EXTREME HOT AND HUMID WEATHER

Practice Policy for Heat and Humidity (GHSA By-Law 2.67)

Schools must follow the statewide policy for conducting practices and voluntary conditioning workouts in all sports during times of extremely high heat and/or humidity that **will be signed by each head coach at the beginning of each season and distributed to all players and their parents or guardians.** The policy shall follow modified guidelines of the American College of Sports Medicine in regard to:

1. The scheduling of practices at various heat/humidity levels
2. The ratio of workout time to time allotted for rest and hydration at various heat/humidity levels
3. The heat/humidity level that will result in practices being terminated

A scientifically approved instrument that measures Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) reading must be utilized at each practice to ensure that the written policy is being followed properly.

WBGT READING	ACTIVITY GUIDELINES & REST BREAK GUIDELINES
Under 82.0	Normal activities—Provide at least three (3) separate rest breaks each hour of minimum duration of three(3) minutes each during workout
82.0 – 86.9	Use discretion for intense or prolonged exercise; watch at-risk players carefully; provide at least three (3) separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four (4) minutes duration each.
87.0 – 89.9	Maximum practice time is two (2) hours. For football: players restricted to helmet, shoulder pads, and shorts during practice. All protective equipment must be removed for conditioning activities. For all sports: Provide at least four separate rest breaks each hour of a minimum of four (4) minutes each.
90.0 – 92.0	Maximum length of practice is one hour, no protective equipment may be worn during practice and there may be no conditioning activities. There must be 20-minutes of rest breaks provided during the hour of practice.
Over 92.1	No outdoor workouts; Cancel exercise; delay practices until a cooler WBGT reading occurs.

GUIDELINES FOR HYDRATION AND REST BREAKS

1. Rest time should involve both unlimited hydration intake (water or electrolyte drinks) and rest without any activity involved
2. For football, helmets should be removed during rest time.
3. The site of the rest time should be a “cooling zone” and not in direct sunlight.
4. When the WBGT reading is over 86:
 - a. ice towels and spray bottles filled with ice water should be available at the “cooling zone” to aid the cooling process
 - b. cold immersion tubs must be available for practices for the benefit of any player showing early signs of heat illness

DEFINITIONS

1. **Practice:** the period of time that a participant engages in a coach-supervised, school-approved sport or conditioning-related activity. Practices are timed from the time the players report to the field until they leave the field.
2. **Walk through:** this period of time shall last no more than one hour, is not considered to be a part of the practice time regulation, and may not involve conditioning or weight room activities. Players may not wear protective equipment.

PENALTIES: Schools violating heat policy shall be fined a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$1,000.

Cobb County Guidelines:

1. All sports: All sports that condition, practice or play in conditions of high heat/humidity must monitor and follow these guidelines.
Football Only: When conditions warrant football is required to measure and document the Wet Bulb Globe Temperature prior to practice and at 15 to 20 minute intervals throughout practice. This should be done by a responsible party, i.e.: the school athletic administrator, athletic trainer or football coach. These records are to be kept on file.
2. Practices and games should be held early in the morning and later in the evening to avoid times when environmental conditions are generally more severe.
3. An unlimited supply of cold water shall be available to participants during practices and games.
 - a. Coaches/Supervisors shall inform all students participating that cold water is always available or accessible and they will be given permission anytime he/she asks for water.
 - b. Hydration and fluid replacement is a daily process. Students should hydrate themselves before, during, and after practice. Meals should include an appropriate amount of fluid intake in addition to a healthy diet.
4. Give adequate rest periods. Remove appropriate equipment or clothing when possible. Exposed skin cools more efficiently.
 - a. Football players shall be allowed to remove helmets.
 - b. Shoulder pads should be removed if conditions warrant.
5. For football and other sports when warranted the athletes should weigh in before practice and weigh out to monitor water loss to identify those who may become dehydrated.
6. Participants should wear clothes that are light in weight and color.
7. Students who need careful monitoring include:
 - a. Overweight students
 - b. Weight control problems (fluctuation)
 - c. Those taking over-the-counter and prescription medication
 - d. Students who have done absolutely no exercise at all
8. Be familiar with all heat related symptoms and corresponding treatments.
9. Be familiar with any emergency and 911 procedures.
10. Be familiar with the WBGT Chart and utilize guidelines determining length of practice and rest.
11. Any directives from the Central Office must be strictly followed.

HEAT ILLNESS SYMPTOMS AND TREATMENTS

(As Recommended by the National Athletic Trainers Association, July 1999)

Heat illness is used to define several types of afflictions suffered when an individual experiences a rising body temperature and dehydration. Following are the different forms identified by the NATA.

Heat Cramps

- Muscle spasms caused by an **imbalance of water and electrolytes** in muscles
- Usually affects the legs and abdominal muscles
- Rest in a cool place
- **Drink plenty of fluids**
- Proper stretching and massaging
- Application of ice in some cases

Heat Exhaustion

- Can be a precursor to heat stroke
- Normal to high temperature
- Heavy sweating
- Skin is flushed or cool and pale
- Headaches, dizziness
- Rapid pulse, nausea, weakness
- Physical collapse may occur
- Can occur without prior symptoms, such as cramps
- Get to a cool place immediately and out of the heat
- Drink plenty of fluids
- Remove excess clothing
- In some cases, immerse body in cool water

Heat Stroke

- Body's cooling system shuts down
- Increased core temperature of 104° F or greater
- If untreated it can cause brain damage, internal organ damage and even death
- Sweating stops
- Shallow breathing and rapid pulse
- Possible disorientation or lose consciousness
- Possible irregular heartbeat and cardiac arrest
- Call 911 immediately
- Cool bath with ice packs near large arteries, such as neck, armpits, groin
- Replenish fluids by drinking or intravenously, if needed