



ADELAIDE TURF CRICKET ASSOCIATION

EXTREME HEAT A HEALTH GUIDE FOR HOT WEATHER

We all spend significant time outside in sunny weather, but extreme heat can seriously damage your health.

This is a guide to assist you look after yourself and others during days of extreme heat.

Effects of extreme heat on health

During a period of extreme heat you may become dehydrated and your body may overheat. If you already have a heart or respiratory problem this may make your symptoms worse. Keeping yourself cool will reduce the risk of heat-related illness. If you start to feel unwell, seek medical advice as soon as possible!

Heat Related Illnesses

The main causes of illness (and possibly death) during a heatwave are **respiratory and cardiovascular diseases**. There are also a number of specific heat-related illnesses such as:

- **Heat Cramps** – Caused by dehydration and loss of electrolytes (often following exercise).
- **Heat Rash** – small, red, itchy papules.
- **Heat Oedema** – Due to vasodilation and retention of fluid (mainly in lower legs)
- **Heat syncope** – dizziness and fainting due to dehydration, vasodilation, cardiovascular disease and certain medications.
- **Heat Exhaustion** – This is most common! It occurs as a result of water or sodium depletion, with non-specific features of dizziness; nausea and vomiting; muscle weakness or cramps; and circulatory collapse; and is present when the core temperature is between 37C and 40C. Left untreated, heat exhaustion may evolve into heatstroke!

- **Heatstroke** – can become a ‘point of no return’ whereby the body’s thermoregulation mechanism fails. The results in a medical emergency, with symptoms such as: headaches; nausea; an intense thirst; sleepiness; confusion; disorientation; aggression; convulsions; unconsciousness; hot dry skin; and core body temperature exceeding 40C for between 45 mins and 8 hours. Heatstroke can result in cell death, organ failure, brain damage or death.

Regardless of the underlying cause of the heat-related symptoms, the initial treatment is always the same – move the person to somewhere cooler and cool them down.

What should you do?

Plan Ahead

Check the weather forecast and any high temperature health warnings at:

Bureau of Meteorology: www.bom.gov.au

SA Department of Health: www.health.sa.gov.au

Be aware of the Adelaide Turf Cricket Association Hot Weather Policy in relation to your grade (<http://atca.sa.cricket.com.au/>)

Stay Cool

As far as practicable – stay out of the heat!

If you are part of the batting side, stay indoors (in cooler temperatures) while you are not required to bat.

A loose damp cloth or scarf on the back of the neck, or spraying/splashing your face and neck with cold water several times during the day will help keep you cool.

Drink Regularly

Drink regularly even if you do not feel thirsty – water and fruit juice are best!

Aim to drink 3L of water on each of the 2 days prior to the game

On Game Day 1-2 glasses upon waking and over the course of the morning 4 – 6 glasses of fluid (water or sports drink best)

Try to avoid alcohol, tea and coffee – they make dehydration worse.

Eat as you normally would, however try to eat more cold food – particularly salads and fruit which contain water.

Seek advice if you have concerns

If you are worried about your health during extreme heat, especially if you are taking medication, please contact your doctor. Also, if you feel unwell or have any unusual symptoms please contact a doctor or health care professional.

Watch for cramp in your arms, legs or stomach; feelings of mild confusion, weakness or problems sleeping.

Remember, heatstroke results in a very serious medical emergency! It can develop very suddenly, and can rapidly lead to unconsciousness. If you suspect someone has heatstroke, call 000 immediately.