

How to Beat the Heat, Steps to Take to Prevent Heat Related Injuries & Illnesses During Volleyball Festival

by

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Well welcome back to Phoenix and as many returning teams already remember Arizona can be HOT to say the least during your week at the Festival. While we have a comprehensive Sports Medicine Staff comprised of 50 plus Athletic Trainers, Athletic Training Students and Physicians available providing round the clock medical services both through roving patrols and at three athletic training rooms in the Phoenix Convention Center to care for all our participants medical needs we would like to provide some tips on how to avoid heat related illness during your time competing at the Festival. This information will help your athletes stay at a high level of performance while competing in Phoenix.

The current weather reports according to www.weather.com are showing estimated Hi's of 106°F and Low's of 79°F for the last week of June thru July 4th. Now while this may seem "Hot" yes the good news is AZ has very little to no humidity. Now everything is relative and depending what region of United States or World your coming from this environment will require you to acclimatize and take precautions to avoid heat related illness. Again while our sports medicine staff love's to interact with you and your teams we hope this interaction occurs in our watching and observing your practices/games and not because you need our services!

The first thing to realize is that Arizona climate is a desert climate and as a result many of your athletes may be losing more fluid than they realize! Often in a more humid environment athletes notice or recognize they have lost fluid by the amount of sweat they have produced and seen on them and their uniforms, however in a desert climate like AZ much of this is absorbed into the air and may not allow the athlete to recognize how much fluid they are losing. While your teams will be playing in the air-conditioned facilities of the Phoenix Convention Center as coaches, chaperones and parents you must understand your athletes will be losing a lot of fluids. Additionally, think about what activities you have planned for your team while at the festival in between matches during your AM or PM off. Now we do want you to enjoy your stay in Phoenix, we just want to make sure that you should recognize added stressors for heat.

- Laying out at the pool should be avoided during the mid day hours of 12 to 2 pm
- Plan to be at the pools during morning or evening as sun is going down
- Plan alternative activities that are inside – catching a movie at the theatres next to the Convention Center especially for mid day heat
- Wear sun screen EVERYONE especially when out in the sun!
- Plan for rest time!!! Again mid day naps and be sure your players get plenty of sleep at night!!

- Any team members with a previous history of a Heat Illness is at higher risk, please remember your players may play other sports and had an incidence you may not be aware of and you need to be aware of any players who have a previous history of any heat illness to watch more closely so ask them as you make the trip to Phoenix!
- Any players with an illness i.e. cold, flu, strep or recovering are at higher risk
- Some Medications will make players more susceptible to dehydration or their skin sensitive to the sun resulting in burning easier!
- Make sure your players are eating! That means a Good Breakfast, Lunch and Dinner!
 - Here is a link to great article with some simple tips for Volleyball Players Nutritional needs and covers how to rehydrate as well written by [Aaron Brock MS, ATC, PES Director of Sports Medicine and Performance to the U.S. National Teams USA Men's Olympic Volleyball Team](#)

Next coaches, parents and chaperones you need to be able to recognize and be on the alert for signs of heat related illnesses which if you see any of them you need to contact the Festival Sports Medicine Staff ASAP, again it is always better to be safe than let it progress so please contact us or bring your athlete in for an evaluation as that is what we are their to do!

First realize that youth athletes are at higher risk for heat related illness and dehydration, regardless of their level of conditions (thought this can help!). Next, understand in the Dry Desert Southwest even with your teams playing inside, and if you plan only indoor activities during your down time you can have a player suffer from a heat related illness so do not rule it out!

Again be safe if your unsure bring your athlete by for an evaluation if you have further questions feel free to ask any of our festival Sports Medicine Staff or stop by one of the three Sports Medicine Facilities we will have set up for you. To find a member of our staff just look for us in the Bright Pink Shirts!

The following are some tips for Dehydration and Heat Related Illness adapted from articles written by Annie and published by National Athletic Trainers' Association (www.nata.org).

"Dehydration is an entirely preventable problem, as long as parents and kids understand how to drink enough of the right kinds of fluids to prevent it," said Lilly. "I want to ensure the kids soccer camps I host are the best they can be, and sharing the important Defeat the Heat information makes my camp even more valuable to athletes and their parents."

Each year more than 300 people die of heat-related illnesses, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Many more children, like 11-year-old Abe Howe of Coalinga, CA, who helped launch the 2002 Defeat the Heat campaign, require medical attention due to dehydration and heat illnesses suffered during the hot summer months.

HOW TO DEFEAT THE HEAT

Research shows that children are more susceptible to dehydration and heat illness than adults, but a survey commissioned by the National SAFE KIDS Campaign revealed that more than three out of four parents of active kids aged 8-14 do not know how to prevent dehydration in their children. A few basics all parents should know:

- A child can lose up to a quart of sweat during two hours of exercise.
- Children absorb more heat from their environment than adults and cannot dissipate that heat through sweat as quickly.
- The "ABCs" are an easy way for kids and parents to remember how to Defeat the Heat™:
- Always drink before, during and after activity to replace what you've lost through sweat,
- Bring the right fluids. Research shows sports drinks like Gatorade hydrate best.
- Consider fluids as part of the essential safety equipment for sports.
- Studies show that when drinking water, kids will drink only about 50 percent of what they need while a lightly flavored sports drink like Gatorade encourages them to drink 90 percent more than water to stay better hydrated.
- Warning signs of dehydration include thirst, headaches and unusual fatigue.

"Most certified athletic trainers unfortunately have first-hand experience with treating dehydration and heat illness in athletes of all ages," said Marjorie Albohm, certified athletic trainer (ATC) who serves on the NATA board of directors. "Because of our medical training and knowledge of physical activity and sports, certified athletic trainers can respond to these emergencies appropriately. Prevention is the key issue, however, which is why we partner with programs like Defeat the Heat and organizations like the National SAFE KIDS Campaign."

In addition to outreach through the pro sports leagues, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign and NATA, with support from The Gatorade Company, will hold local Defeat the Heat events throughout the country, distribute a televised public service announcement and make educational materials available through www.defeattheheat.com and a hotline at 1-866-5DEFEAT.