

# ECPR

## Elbert County Parks and Recreation

### HEAT RELATED ILLNESS PROCEDURES & GUIDELINES

*The main mechanism the body cools itself by is evaporation through sweating. Exercising muscle produces heat that needs to leave the body through evaporation of sweat. If the humidity is high, and the air is already saturated with water, the sweat will not evaporate effectively and the body's cooling system is inefficient. Heavy pads, hats and helmets, as well as heavy clothing already saturated can also hinder evaporative cooling. Hydration status is also vital to maintain cooling efficiency. As the body's fluid stores become depleted, the ability to get fluid to the skin surface for evaporation decreases, and body heat builds up. When the body's ability to dissipate heat and cool itself fails, heat illness results. Heat illness can be categorized based on severity or the symptoms. The following is each category and the treatment procedures for those categories:*

#### **DEHYDRATION**

Dehydration is the earliest and most mild form of heat related illness, but still serious. Symptoms include: Thirst, Dry mouth, Nausea, Headache, Dizzy or disoriented and Muscle or abdominal cramps. **Treatment for Dehydration is immediate removal from exercise and placement in the shade or air-conditioned environment, removal of equipment and unnecessary clothing. Encourage them to drink water and continue to observe closely for any progression of the symptoms.**

#### **HEAT EXHAUSTION**

Heat exhaustion is when the body's cooling mechanisms begin to fail as exercise continues. Symptoms include: Excessive thirst, Profuse sweating, Headache, Abdominal pain, Nausea, Vomiting, Dizziness and disorientation and Fainting or passing out. **Treatment for Heat Exhaustion is the same as dehydration with arrangements to be made to transport to an Emergency Department. While awaiting transport, elevate the legs and cool rapidly with cold water, wet towels, icepacks in armpits and neck, or fans. Monitor very closely for deterioration. Transport as soon as possible to an Emergency Department.**

#### **HEAT STROKE**

Heat stroke is when the body's cooling mechanism has failed and the core body temperature begins to rapidly rise. This condition is life-threatening. Symptoms include Nausea, Vomiting, Diarrhea, Disorientation, Headache, Hot skin (wet or dry) Rapid heart rate, rapid breathing, Seizures or Coma. **Treatment consists of calling 911, Rapid Cooling and support with CPR until ambulance arrives.**

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*Heat related illness is a preventable condition that, when it does occur, requires immediate recognition and treatment. The most effective way to treat heat illness is to prevent it. Below are some guidelines for heat illness prevention:*

1. Schedule frequent water breaks, as often as every 15 minutes, with removal of equipment, including shoulder pads.
2. Allow overweight or non-acclimated kids to adjust to the heat through shorter, less strenuous workouts.
3. Encourage your players to drink water during throughout the day to maintain their hydration.
4. Implement a “buddy system” where each player is assigned to keep an eye on a teammate to recognize early signs of heat illness.
5. Keep a close eye on your players and monitor them continuously for any heat related symptoms.
6. Have parent contact information for all players in case of an emergency.

**ECPR now has a Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) located at McWilliams Park. The AED is located inside the Gym lobby and is accessible during all practices and games.**

ECPR will also have a staff member present at all practices and games to assist you with heat related issues if the need arises.