



Casey Panthers Soccer Club

SunSmart/Heat Policy

Whilst our soccer season runs during winter, our training usually starts in Summer/Autumn. All members, spectators, officials need to be conscious of the weather during this time to ensure safe participation in sports and training environments.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world, with two in three Australians developing some form of skin cancer before age 70. Melanoma is one of the most commonly diagnosed cancers in Victorians aged 15–29. Yet most skin cancers can be prevented by using sun protection measures at appropriate times of the year.

The sun's ultraviolet (UV) radiation is the major cause of skin cancer. UV damage accumulated during childhood and adolescence is strongly associated with an increased risk of skin cancer later in life.

The sun protection times are forecast by the Bureau of Meteorology for the time of day UV levels are predicted to reach 3 or higher, based on your location. At these levels, sun protection is recommended for all skin types. In Victoria, UV levels are forecast to reach 3 or higher from mid-August to the end of April.

To assist with the implementation of this policy, members are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times via the [free SunSmart app](#), sunsmart.com.au or bom.gov.au.

From time to time Casey Panthers Soccer Club committee will review the forecasted weather and ask that training times be rescheduled, be adjusted to include extra breaks for water or rest, or in extreme weather cases be cancelled.

Casey Panthers Soccer Club will ensure we have adequate supplies SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen for members to use AND/OR members are reminded and encouraged to bring their own SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to outdoor activities. Members should also be allocated time to apply and reapply sunscreen as required.

Casey Panthers Soccer Club will also ensure we have SunSmart hats available as required for outdoor activities for members and/or members are reminded to bring their own hat and sunglasses if required. Members will also be encouraged to find shade areas or move outdoor activity indoors as required.

The following link should be referenced regards to exertional heat conditions and symptoms to be aware of.

<https://memberhq.s3.amazonaws.com/vicsport/uploads/pdf.pdf>

HEAT POLICY -

1. INTRODUCTION

This policy outlines Casey Panthers approach to protecting the safety of participants during hot weather. Warm to hot weather creates a risk that participants may experience a form of exertional heat illness, such as muscle cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion and even heat stroke.

The aim of Casey Panthers Heat Policy is to:

- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone who participates, including volunteers, families, coaches and officials.
- Detail strategies for participation to continue with appropriate mitigation and risk management strategies in place.

Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to this Policy, please contact the Casey Panthers Secretary (secretary@caseypanthers.com.au).

2. POLICY STATEMENT

Casey Panthers Soccer Club is committed to ensuring our sport is accessible to everyone and we take every opportunity to provide the highest level of service to all members and participants. Casey Panthers Soccer Club has a duty of care to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of participants, during warm to very hot weather and heatwaves. When there is a risk of exertional heat illness, Casey Panthers commits to acting in the best interest of all participants by implementing mitigation strategies.

3. SCOPE

This policy applies to all people involved in our organisation, including committee members, volunteers, coaches, officials, participants, parents and guardians. It covers all activities in which people are physically active. It covers situations where people are inactive yet situated in hot, sunny conditions, such as volunteers, parents, spectators and coaches.

This policy is designed to reduce the risks and prevalence of injury and illness which can occur when people play sport during warm to very hot weather conditions.

4. RECOGNISING EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS

Exertional heat illness can be categorised from mild to severe, including muscle cramps, heat syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion, heat injury and heat stroke (life threatening).

Associated signs and symptoms can include:

- Headache
- Light-headedness and dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Fatigue
- Change in personality (disorientation, confusion, irrational behaviour, irritability)
- Change in performance (unsteadiness, loss of balance and coordination, loss of skills)
- Seizures
- Loss of consciousness
- Cardiac arrest

People to whom this policy applies need to be aware that exertional heat illness can occur whenever there are actual or potential environmental, individual and organisational risk factors, and it is in these circumstances that (insert club name) is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

NOTE: Exertional heat illness can be life threatening, therefore, if a person is concerned about an immediate risk to an individual's health and safety, the person must phone "000" (or "112" from a mobile when you are out of your service provider's coverage area) as soon as practicable.

5. RISK FACTORS FOR EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS

Casey Panthers Soccer Club recognises that multiple factors pose a risk to the health and safety of participants, including the environment, factors specific to individuals and factors specific to our sport.

Environmental Risk Factors

Climate related environmental risk factors can increase the risk of illness and injury. Risk factors include:

- Air temperature
- Humidity (it becomes more difficult to regulate body temperature in higher humidity due to a decrease in sweat evaporation)
- Wind speed (this affects the rate of water evaporation)
- Radiant temperature (such as radiant heat from ground surface).

Individual Risk Factors

The following individual risk factors are relevant our participants These factors need to be understood by everyone involved at Casey Panthers Soccer Club.

- Age: Children and adults over 65 are considered at greater risk
- Poor physical condition: Some people may experience heat illness at lower temperatures due to exercising beyond current capacity
- Inadequate acclimatization: This occurs when our body is not conditioned to warm and/or humid climates
- Illness or medical conditions: Individuals may be more affected by heat due to medications and illness
- Dehydration and electrolyte imbalances: Good hydration is needed to keep your body's core temperature down during sport or hot conditions. You must rehydrate to compensate for what the body loses in sweat.

Sport Risk Factors

Sport risk factors are specific characteristics of the sport activity which can contribute to an increased risk of exertional heat illness. The following risk factors are relevant to soccer. Many of these risk factors can be adjusted to reduce some of the risk of exertional heat illness.

Heat exhaustion and dehydration in full sun or hot windy conditions during game times or training sessions, may be deemed to risky and may require a change in the activity such as more drink breaks, extra rest time, decrease in playing time.

Risk factors include:

- Excessive clothing and athletic gear can increase the risks of the body's core temperature rising
- Lack of awareness and education of exertional heat illness
- Venue and location. Surfaces such as asphalt and synthetic turf radiate more heat than water or natural grass. Indoor venues with low air flow or without air conditioning can also present a risk
- Level and duration of activities. The longer the activity and the more intense, the higher the risk

- Time of play. Risks are highest between 11am and sunset.

6. MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The risks of exertional heat illness being suffered by participants can be reduced through a range of mitigation strategies. These strategies can be implemented by everyone. In particular individuals with a duty of care to participants should consider appropriate mitigation strategies during warm to very hot weather conditions.

Casey Panthers Soccer Club committee will implement the following sport modification parameters if there is a risk of exertional heat illness to participants.

Hydration

- Promoting hydration strategies including drinking to thirst before, during and after physical activity and reducing intake of sugar sweetened beverages, coffee and alcohol.

Water and cooling

- Encouraging participants to bring additional drinking water (water and the quantities to be provided by the organisation)
- Increasing availability and access to water for drinking and where appropriate, mist sprays (detail will be responsible to provide)
- Encourage participants to bring ice slurry drinks and cold towels

Shade

- Increasing the amount of shade available (by providing portable shelters, encouraging participants, clubs, and teams or families to bring portable shelters)
- Increasing frequency of breaks for participants to take refuge in shaded areas

Rescheduling / timing changes

- Changing the time of the event to a cooler part of the day
- Postponing to future dates
- Increasing frequency and length of breaks
- Shorten duration of games or races
- Exclude higher intensity activities (sprints, long distance)

Rule changes

- Reducing length of games, races or activities
- Mandating player rotations
- Mandating rest and drink breaks
- Allowing for appropriate clothing or uniform modifications where required
- Reducing or removing individual or team penalties if they elect not to participate

Incidents

- Ensure professional first aid responders, or qualified first aid personnel, are always on site when people are physically active during hot weather
- Monitor players closely and recognise signs and symptoms of exertional heat illness

7. ACTIVATING THIS POLICY

This heat policy must be referred to if it is determined by Casey Panthers Soccer Club that there is a risk of exertional heat illnesses during immediate or upcoming matches, games, training sessions, activities, competitions or events.

Climate forecasts are available up to seven days before an event. We will monitor forecast ambient temperatures so that appropriate plans and communications can take place.

Casey Panthers uses the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) as the source of climactic information. All committee members, coaches and officials should ensure they have access to:

- The BoM Weather smartphone app <http://www.bom.gov.au/app/>. This provides information on ambient temperature and Apparent Temperature (AT) which includes air temperature and humidity and appears on smartphone app as e.g. 'feels like 20.1C'
- The BoM website: Forecast Summary of Victorian Towns <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/forecasts/towns.shtml>

If climate conditions (like heatwaves) are likely to pose an increased risk to people's health, the Department of Health and Human Services will issue a Heat Health Alert. <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weatherand-public-health/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat/heat-health-alert-status>.

At least two club emails will be registered to receive Heat Health Alert notifications.

The following table is provided as a guide only. The temperature and humidity levels are based on the Sports Medicine Australia 'Beat The Heat' Fact Sheet, (<https://sma.org.au/smasite-content/uploads/2017/08/beat-the-heat-2011.pdf>). Please note that the risks of exertional heat illness will increase where relative humidity is above the what the table indicates.

Forecast or current ambient temperature

Actions for consideration – adjust to suit the needs of your club, based on section 6.

21C-25C Humidity exceeds 70%

- Promote hydration strategies
- Ensure participants have easy access to shade

26C-30C Humidity exceeds 60%

- Promote hydration strategies
- Ensure participants have easy access to shade
- Consider less intense and shorter duration activities

31C-35C

- Actively monitor the health and well-being of all participants
- Be cautious of over exertion during training

Humidity exceeds 50%

- Promote hydration strategies and provide additional water
- Ensure participants have easy access to shade
- Consider less intense and shorter duration activities
- Consider postponing to cooler parts of the day

>36C Humidity exceeds 30%

Heat Health Alert issued for relevant area

- Consider postponing or cancelling the sport or recreation activity
- If continuing, implement relevant mitigation strategies
- Actively monitor the health and well-being of all participants
- Be cautious of over exertion during training
- Promote hydration strategies and provide additional water
- Ensure participants have easy access to shade
- Consider less intense and shorter duration activities
- Consider postponing to cooler parts of the day

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF Casey Panthers Soccer Club personnel.

Personnel involved in protecting participants from exertional heat illness include the committee members, parents and volunteers. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of all members and are expected to:

- Understand the risks of exertional heat illness, as appropriate to their role
- Appropriately act on any concerns raised by participants about exertional heat illness
- Know and follow guidelines in relation to the care of all members during warm to very hot weather, and at times of extended periods of exceptionally high day and night-time temperatures (heatwaves)
- Promptly communicate changes through to participants through the most commonly used communication channels at the club (such as email, Facebook, apps or other)

9. POLICY PROMOTION

This policy will be made available to all members via Facebook, website, email).

10. REVIEW PROCESS

This policy will be reviewed by the Casey Panthers Soccer Club Committee on an annual basis.

If you would like to provide Casey Panthers Soccer Club with any feedback or suggestions to improve this policy, please contact club secretary (secretary@caseypanthers.com.au).