

Treasure Valley Family YMCA

Heat Guidelines for Outdoor Activities

WHEN IN DOUBT SIT IT OUT

For the safety of our staff, volunteers, members and program participants, The Treasure Valley Family YMCA will cancel any outdoor activities if the temperature and heat index* reaches 105 degrees Fahrenheit or above.

Tips for Warm Weather Conditions

When warm weather conditions become extreme, please remember the following:

- Take frequent rest and water breaks
- Drink water before you are thirsty (by the time you are thirsty, you are already dehydrated!)
- Wear light, loose fitting clothing made of breathable fabric light in color
- Listen to your body: rest if you feel chest pain, dizzy, lightheaded, or nauseated

Heat Index under 95°	<p>All outdoor activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ample amounts of water (water should always be available and program participants should take in as much water as they desire) • Optional water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes duration • Ice-down towels for cooling • Monitor program participants carefully for sign of over-heating and/or dehydration
Heat Index 95° to 99°	<p>All outdoor activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ample amounts of water • <u>Mandatory</u> water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes duration • Ice-down towels for cooling • Monitor program participants carefully for sign of over-heating and/or dehydration <p>Sports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact • Reduce time of outside activity (consider practicing later in the day) • Re-check the temperature every 30 minutes to monitor for increased heat index
Heat Index 100° to 104°	<p>All outdoor activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide ample amounts of water • <u>Mandatory</u> water breaks every 30 minutes for 10 minutes duration. • Ice-down towels for cooling • Monitor program participants carefully for sign of over-heating and/or dehydration • Reduce time of outside activity • Reduce time of indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable • Postpone practice to later in day if possible <p>Sports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Helmets and other possible equipment removed if not involved in contact • Reduce time of outside activity (consider practicing later in the day) • Re-check the temperature every 30 minutes to monitor for increased heat index
Heat Index 105° or above	<p>All outdoor activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop all outdoor activity <p>Sports:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stop all outdoor activity • Stop all indoor activity if air conditioning is unavailable

*Please note that the heat index is a measure of how hot it feels when relative humidity is taken into account along with the actual air temperature. The heat index is often listed as the “Feels Like” feature on many weather apps/site.

Dehydration and Outdoor Activities: Curb the Risk

Anytime children or adolescents play sports or exercise in hot weather, they're at risk of heat-related illnesses. Understand how heat-related problems happen and what steps you can take to prevent them.

Risk factors for dehydration

A child might be more vulnerable to dehydration and other heat-related illnesses in a hot or humid environment if he or she:

- Wears clothing or protective gear that contributes to excessive heat retention
- Rarely exercises
- Is overweight or obese
- Is sick or had a recent illness, especially involving diarrhea, vomiting or a fever
- Is taking certain supplements or medications, such as cold medicine
- Has had a previous heat-related illness
- Has a chronic condition, such as diabetes
- Isn't well-rested

Acclimating to the heat

Heat-related problems are most likely within the first few days of practice in a hot environment. That's why it's best to take it easy at first, gradually increasing the amount of activity — and the amount of protective equipment — as the days pass. Young athletes might need up to two weeks to safely acclimate to the heat. During hot and humid conditions, coaches are encouraged to:

- Require young athletes to drink plenty of fluids before practice and during regular beverage breaks — even if they aren't thirsty
- Make sure clothing is light colored, lightweight and loose-fitting, or exposes as much of the skin as possible
- Decrease or stop practices or competitions if necessary, or move them indoors or to a shady area

Knowing when to slow down — or call it quits

To determine when heat and humidity make strenuous exercise risky for young athletes, our program staff will heat index by checking the NIOSH/OSHA Heat Safety Tool mobile application (<https://www.cdc.gov/niosh/topics/heatstress/heatapp.html>). If the Heat Index is too high (at or above 105 degrees Fahrenheit), outdoor athletic activities might need to be limited or canceled.

Spotting dehydration and other heat-related problems

Even mild dehydration can affect a child's athletic performance and make him or her lethargic and irritable. Left untreated, dehydration increases the risk of other heat-related illnesses, including heat cramps, heat exhaustion and heatstroke. Encourage children to pay attention to early signs and symptoms of dehydration, including:

- Dry or sticky mouth
- Thirst
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Cramps
- Excessive fatigue

Remind children that he or she should report signs and symptoms to the program staff right away. If dehydration is detected early, fluids and rest might be all that's needed. If a child seems confused or loses consciousness, seek emergency care.

Prevention is key

If a child plays sports in hot weather, encourage him or her to drink plenty of fluids before, during and after practices and games. Teach children the signs and symptoms of dehydration, as well as the importance of speaking up if they occur. Involve parents, other staff members, and coaches too. Talk to the coach about adjusting the intensity of practice depending on the temperature and humidity on the field — and support the coach's decision to cancel games and practices when it's dangerously hot outside.