



Media release
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For immediate release

Exercising in the heat warning

With the temperature in Perth set to hit over 36 degrees over the coming days, Sports Medicine Australia WA urges all sporting bodies to adopt a sensible and flexible approach to the heat.

Exercising or playing sport in hot or humid conditions can lead to dehydration, heat illness and sometimes the more serious consequence of heat stroke.

Sports Medicine Australia 'Beat the Heat' guidelines recommend when the temperature is 36 degrees and above with a relative humidity exceeding 30 per cent the risk of heat illness is extreme. It is recommended that sports activities are postponed to cooler conditions (or cooler parts of the day) or cancelled.

Sports Medicine Physician, Medical Director of the West Australian Institute of Sport and Sports Medicine Australia spokesperson, Dr Carmel Goodman, agrees.

"I strongly reinforce this advice and recommend cancelling all sporting events over the next few days when temperatures are predicted to reach over 40 degrees," said Dr Goodman.

"Heat stroke can be fatal and warning signs of heat illness including headache, nausea, confusion or light-headedness, should be treated seriously by stopping exercise, drinking fluids and seeking medical management if not improving rapidly," said Dr Goodman.

Sports Medicine Australia offers the following summer safety tips:

- Stay hydrated by drinking water before, during and after exercise.
- Schedule activity to avoid the hottest part of the day.
- Take rest breaks, in the shade if possible.
- Wear light coloured, lightweight and loose fitting clothing that allows easy evaporation of sweat from the skin. Wear sunglasses, 30+ sunscreen and a hat.
- Reduce the duration and intensity of a warm up to minimise an increase in body heat and temperature.
- Do not take part in strenuous activity if you have recently experienced a high temperature, infection, diarrhea or vomiting.
- If you have a medical condition such as asthma, diabetes, a heart problem, epilepsy or obesity, are taking medication, or are pregnant; you may experience difficulties exercising in the heat. If unsure you should seek advice from a sports medicine professional.
- Persons suffering from heat illness can recover rapidly with assistance – laying down in a cool place, removing excess clothing, wetting skin or using ice packs, and drinking cool water. However if symptoms do not improve, seek medical assistance.

For further advice visit wa.sma.org.au

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