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Can your patients and staff differentiate between heat syncope, heat exhaustion and heat stroke?

Understanding the difference between these terms and conditions is vital in making appropriate clinical decisions and will dictate treatment.

2

Do you have proper staffing to adequately prevent and care for heat illness?

Athletic trainers are experts in recognizing and treating heat illness and should be the first line of defense.

Collaboration with local physicians and emergency response personnel is vital for proper care.

Does this collaboration include discussion regarding the best practice of lowering core body temperature prior to transport?

3

Have you identified those who are at a high risk of heat illness?

Obtain medical history and pre-participation exams for all participants so medical staff is prepared to treat each patient.

Preparing for Heat Illness: Athletic Trainer Checklist



Is your emergency action plan current and properly distributed?

- Review and train those individuals who will be responsible for care in an exertional heat illness emergency.
- Do you annually practice your EAP for heat stroke, including cold water immersion, checking to make sure your rectal thermometer has working batteries and reviewing how to perform rectal thermometry?
- Does education include coaches, administration and student athletes on signs, symptoms and care for suspected heat illness?



Are you prepared to monitor and identify high-risk environmental conditions?

- Heat index should be measured and recorded regularly and activity should be modified based on wet-bulb globe temperature monitoring or heat index table.

ksi.uconn.edu/prevention/wet-bulb-globe-temperature-monitoring
www.weather.gov/ama/heatindex



Do you have a hydration plan?

- Fluids should be readily available at all times.
- Participants should be informed on how to monitor their own hydration status.

www.ncaa.org/sport-science-institute/heat-and-hydration



Do you have a cooling plan in place?

- Cold water immersion ice tub should be available to treat an athlete with suspected heat illness.
- A plan should be in place of how to measure and record core body temperature. Rectal temperature is best practice.
- Rectal temperature is the only method of obtaining an immediate and accurate measurement of core body temperature in an exercising individual.

Need further resources?

Heat Illness (NATA.org)
Korey Stringer Institute (University of Connecticut)
NATA Advance Releases Executive Summary of Exertional Heat Illnesses Position Statement and Issues New Research on Heat and Hydration