****VIRGINIA SUMMERS ARE GETTING HOTTER DUE TO CLIMATE CHANGE.**

Hotter summers mean it is more important than ever to keep active kids safe. Kids can get sick from heat easier than adults.

Heat illness is a rising risk for student athletes and football players are at highest risk.

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**IS YOUR STUDENT ATHLETE AT RISK FOR HEAT ILLNESS?**

Some factors place young athletes at higher risk from heat:

- Low fitness
- Dehydration
- Fatigue
- Heavy clothing/equipment
- Long or intense exercise
- Certain drugs including ADHD medications (consult physician)

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**10%**

During a 2020 Virginia heat wave, 1 in 10 heat illness emergency visits were for kids.

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**CONTACT US**

For more information about heat illness or the effects of climate change:

**VCCA**

Virginia Coalition for Climate Action

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**SOURCES**


Publication endorsed by **VDH** Virginia Department of Health
**KEEP IT COOL, KIDS**

**HOW TO RECOGNIZE, PREVENT & TREAT HEAT ILLNESS IN STUDENT ATHLETES**

**SIGNS & SYMPTOMS**

**HEAT CRAMPS**
Brief muscle cramps or spasms

**DEHYDRATION**
Increased thirst or dry mouth; headache; lack of energy; reduced or darker urine

**HEAT EXHAUSTION**
Dehydration; headache; dizziness; heavy sweating; nausea or vomiting; muscle cramps

**HEAT STROKE**
Headache; dizziness; heavy sweating; nausea or vomiting; fainting; hot skin; high heart rate and breathing; potential seizures

**TREATING HEAT ILLNESS**

Consult your coach for your team’s action plan. Treatments include:

- **Remove extra clothing and equipment**
- **Move to a shaded or air-conditioned area**
- **Cool the body with cold cloths or ice**
- **Drink cold water or sports drink if not nauseated or vomiting**
- **Raise legs above heart level to support blood flow**
- **Call 911 if signs and symptoms continue or become worse**

**HOW TO PREVENT HEAT ILLNESS**

- **Drink plenty of water.** Don’t wait until your child feels thirsty.
- **Look for shade.** Provide a shaded space for breaks.
- **Enforce more breaks.** Increase the number of breaks in shaded areas with water.
- **Limit equipment whenever safe.** Limit activities that require heavy equipment like helmets and shoulder pads.
- **Schedule events earlier or later.** Schedule events earlier or later when it is cooler.
- **Consider climate change.** Keep summers safe by helping reduce air pollution.

**RETURNING AFTER HEAT ILLNESS**

Children need time off to recover and be free of symptoms before return to play. Seek medical clearance for safety.