



Gainesville ISD Athletics Hot Weather Policy

Practice and competition in hot and humid conditions poses special challenges for student athletes. Heat stress and resulting heat illness is a primary concern in hot and humid conditions. Although deaths from heat illness are rare, they do happen. Constant surveillance and education are necessary to prevent heat related illness. The following practices should be observed.

General Considerations for Risk Reduction:

- Encourage proper education regarding heat illness (for athletes, coaches, parents, and medical staff). Education about risk factors should focus on hydration needs, acclimatization, work/rest ratio, signs and symptoms of exertional heat illnesses, treatment, dietary supplements, nutritional issues, and fitness status.
- Assure that Athletic Trainers have the authority to alter work/rest ratios, practice schedules, amount of equipment, and withdrawal of individuals from participation based on environment and/or athlete's medical conditions.

General Guidelines:

- Gradual acclimatization of the athlete to hot/humid conditions is a must. It is recommended that athletes gradually increase exposure to hot and/or humid environmental conditions. Gainesville ISD will follow the UIL guidelines for acclimatization.
- Clothing and protective equipment can increase heat stress. Dark colored clothing absorbs solar radiation, some fabrics can interfere with the evaporation of sweat and other avenues of heat loss. Protective equipment can also interfere in the same ways.
- To identify heat stress conditions on the field of play wet bulb temperatures will be taken 30 minutes prior to practice as well as every 30 minutes during practice.
- Unlimited access to drinking water will be provided throughout practices and games.

Specific Guidelines:

Heat index of less than 100

- Water breaks every 30-45 minutes

Heat index of 100-105

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 30 minutes
 - Break duration 5 minutes
- Shorts/shirts/helmets
 - Water breaks every 40 min
- Cardiovascular Conditioning
 - Remove helmets

Heat index of 106-110

Football

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 20 minutes (5 min)
 - Practice will not exceed 1hr 45min
- Shorts/shirts/helmets
 - Water breaks every 30 minutes
 - Practice will not exceed 2 hours
- Athletes will be allowed to remove helmets when not in contact drills
- Cardiovascular conditioning: remove helmets and shoulder pads

Cross Country/Track

- Long distance runners must be under direct supervision by coaches at all times
- Water breaks every 30 minutes
- Practice will not exceed 2 hours

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis

- Water breaks every 30 minutes
- Practice will not exceed 2 hours

Off Season Programs

- 45 minutes of heat exposure with a minimum of 1 water break

Heat Index of 111-115**Football**

- Shorts/shoulder pads/helmets only
 - Water breaks every 20 minutes
 - Practice will not exceed 2 hours
- Cardiovascular conditioning duration and intensity must decrease
 - Remove shoulder pads and helmets

Cross Country/Track

- Long distance runners must be directly supervised by coaches at all times
- Water breaks every 20 minutes
- Practice will not exceed 2 hours

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis

- Water breaks every 20 minutes
- Practice not to exceed 2 hours

Off Season Programs

- 30 minutes of heat exposure with a minimum of 1 water break

Heat Index of 116-117**Football**

- Shorts/shirt/helmets only
 - Water break every 20 minutes
 - Practice to not exceed 1hr 30 min total
- No cardiovascular conditioning

Cross Country/Track

- Long distance runners must be directly supervised by coaches at all times
- Water breaks every 15 minutes
- Practice will not exceed 1hr 30min

Baseball/Softball/Soccer/Tennis

- Water breaks every 20 minutes
- Practice will not exceed 2 hours

Off season programs

- 30 minutes of heat exposure with minimum of 1 water break

Heat Index of 118+

All Sports

- Nothing outside will be allowed

Practices may be moved inside, altered, or cancelled at any point under the discretion of the Head Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director.

Junior High Athletics

Heat Index of less than 100

- Water breaks every 30-45 minutes

Heat Index of 100-106

- Full pads
 - Water breaks every 20 minutes
 - Practice will not exceed 1hr 30 min
- Shorts/shoulder pads/helmets
 - Water breaks every 30 minutes
 - Practice will not exceed 1hr 45min
- Athletes will be allowed to remove helmets while not in contact drills
- Cardiovascular conditioning: remove shoulder pads and helmets

Heat Index of 106-110

- Shorts/shoulder pads/helmets only
 - Water breaks every 15 minutes
 - Practice not to exceed 1hr 30min
 - No cardiovascular conditioning

Heat Index of 111+

- No outside practice

Cross Country/Track

- Follow the time and water break guidelines for football
- Distance runners must be under constant coach supervision when heat index is above 100