

Children's/AISD Student Health Services
HEAT-RELATED SAFETY

There are four main heat-related reactions to excess heat:

- ◆ Heat syncope- fainting or near fainting due to overheating.
- ◆ Heat cramps- muscle cramps occurring during intense, prolonged activity in the heat.
- ◆ Heat exhaustion- body temperature of 103-105, dizziness, disorientation, nausea, cramps
- ◆ Heat stroke- body temperature of 106-108, disorientation, seizures, hot and dry skin, coma.

Heat-related reactions will progress if proper treatment is delayed. Please follow the "Quick Care" guidelines at the first sign of a heat-related reaction.

The best defense against heat-related reactions is PREVENTION.

- ◆ At the beginning of a strenuous physical activity, the intensity and duration of exercise should be restrained initially and gradually increased to accomplish acclimatization.
- ◆ Wear lightweight, loose, cool, reflective clothing
- ◆ Fully hydrate students prior to strenuous physical activity. Avoid caffeine, alcohol and high sugar, carbonated drinks.
- ◆ Provide cool water and scheduled frequent rest periods when students are encouraged to drink 2-3 glasses of water.
- ◆ Students with certain conditions are at a **greater risk to heat stress**. Included in these (but not limited to) are: cystic fibrosis, vomiting, diarrhea, fever, obesity, diabetes, chronic heart failure, caloric malnutrition, anorexia nervosa, sweating insufficiency syndrome.
- ◆ Check to see if student's medication has specific precautions re heat, sunlight, etc.
- ◆ The **intensity** of activities that last 30 minutes or more should be **reduced** whenever relative humidity and air temperature (Heat Index) are **above critical levels (HI of 90 or above)**. (See charts I & II). "The higher the humidity, the more dangerous high air temperature is because of decreased evaporation of body sweat." Note that full sun exposure can increase the Heat Index by as much as 15 degrees F.
- ◆ Plan strenuous outdoor activity for early morning or late in the day.
- ◆ Avoid eating heavy, protein-rich foods prior to exercise.
- ◆ Wear sunblock (SPF 15 or higher) and apply 30 minutes prior to outside activity to cool dry skin. Reapply according to manufacture directions.
- ◆ Use a "buddy system" where students who are educated re the symptoms of heat-related illness monitor each other.
- ◆ Provide water on long, non-air conditioned bus trips or encourage students to bring their own.