



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



Press Release

For Immediate Release

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CDC: Athletes need to take special precautions in hot weather

The [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) encourages coaches, athletes, and those exercising outside in hot weather to know the warning signs for heat-related illness and take action when needed.

“Any athlete dying from heat is a tragedy that can be prevented,” said CDC’s [Robin Ikeda, M.D., M.P.H.](#), director of the Office of Noncommunicable Diseases, Injury and Environmental Health. “Coaches, parents, teachers, and athletes should educate themselves on how to recognize and prevent heat-related illness.”

CDC estimates that, each year, there are almost 6,000 emergency department visits for sports and recreation heat illnesses. CDC says the most common activities leading to the hospital visits are football, and exercises such as walking, jogging, running, and calisthenics. People who exercise in extreme heat are more likely to become dehydrated and get heat-related illness.

Extremely hot weather can cause illness or death, but **all** heat-related illnesses and deaths are preventable.

Here are some ways to act against heat-related illness:

- Stop all activity and get to a cool environment if you feel faint or weak.
- Limit outdoor activity, especially midday when the sun is hottest.
- Schedule workouts and practices earlier or later in the day when the temperature is cooler.
- Pace activity. Start activities slow and pick up the pace gradually.
- Drink more water than usual and don’t wait until you’re thirsty to drink more.
- Have a workout partner. Monitor each other’s condition.

- Wear loose, lightweight, light-colored clothing.
- Seek medical care immediately if you or a teammate has [symptoms of heat-related illness](#).

Coaches can learn more about how to protect the athletes in their care by taking [CDC's accredited Web-based course on how to recognize, treat, and prevent heat-related illness](#). School nurses and athletic trainers may also find the course useful for sharing information with others who work with athletes.

CDC has also published a [toolkit](#) to educate readers, especially caregivers for vulnerable groups such as athletes, as well as older adults and small children, about how to recognize warning signs of heat illness. [Materials](#) such as posters for locker rooms and water bottle labels are targeted for use with school athletic programs.

More information about heat illness in high school athletes can be found at <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5932a1.htm>.

For more information on extreme heat and heat safety, call 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636) or visit www.cdc.gov.