

# UV exposure and heat illness checklist



This checklist is a starting point for you to create UV exposure and heat illness guidelines.

These guidelines will help provide a safe environment for athletes, officials, coaches, parents, volunteers, staff, sports trainers and spectators. Some checkpoints may not be relevant and can be removed or you may have some additional prevention strategies to add.

**Strategies relating to UV exposure should reflect the varying levels of UV throughout the year and across Victoria.**

## 1. Schedules, fixtures and rule modifications (including a cancellation policy)

- Where possible, training, events and competitions are scheduled to minimise exposure to UV levels of 3 or higher and avoid high temperatures.
- Cancellation of training, events or competition occurs (according to the rules of «insert your sport's governing body») when high risk conditions are forecast.

Where it is not possible to avoid peak UV and heat periods, the following interim steps are taken to minimise the risk of overexposure to UV and heat illness:

- Warm-up activities are limited in duration and intensity.
- The duration of the activity is reduced.
- Activities start earlier in the morning or later in the evening.
- Rest breaks and opportunities to seek shade and rehydrate are increased.
- Officials rotate out of the sun more frequently than usual.
- Player interchange and substitution is used more frequently than usual.

- Activity is held at an alternative venue (e.g. training at a pool). Officials, coaches and senior members act as role models by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats, applying sunscreen and seeking shade wherever possible.

## 2. Shade

- An assessment of existing shade has been conducted at commonly used outdoor venues.
- The use of shade from buildings, trees and other structures is utilised where possible (e.g. for player interchange, marshalling areas, spectator areas).
- When not actively playing or between individual events, participants are able to rest in shaded areas.
- Marshalling, interchange and presentation ceremony areas are protected by shade.
- Participants and officials rotate to cooler, shaded areas.
- Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants are notified to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).

## 3. Clothing

- Sun-protective clothing is included as part of on and off-field uniform and uniform for officials and volunteers.
- Tops/jerseys are made from UPF (UV protection factor) 50+ material and have long sleeves and a collar.
- Tops/jerseys are loose fitting and lightweight.
- Wide-brimmed, bucket or legionnaire-style hats are included as part of the on and off-field uniform (even if they can't be worn in actual play). Caps and visors do not provide adequate sun protection to the face and neck.
- Participants are advised to wear wrap-around sunglasses that meet the Australian standard (AS/NZS 1067).
- Participants without appropriate protective clothing are not permitted to spend extended periods exposed to UV levels of three and above.



#### 4. Sunscreen

- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is promoted and/or provided to participants.
- Sunscreen is stored below 30°C and replaced once it is past the use-by date.
- Participants are encouraged to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before training or playing and to reapply every two hours or immediately after swimming or towelling dry.
- For best protection, participants are encouraged to apply a generous amount of sunscreen (the equivalent of one teaspoon per limb, and one each for the head, back and front of torso).

#### 5. Air flow

- Air flow is maximised at training and competition venues (e.g. doors and windows are opened or marquee walls removed).
- Spaces with air-conditioning or fans are made available in high risk conditions

#### 6. Hydration

- All participants (including officials and coaches) are required to bring their own clearly labelled drink bottle.
- Cool water is available to all participants.
- All those involved are aware that they need to be well hydrated before participating in physical activity.
- Flexible drink breaks are provided in hot or humid conditions.
- Individuals are permitted to drink between breaks at their own discretion.

#### 7. Education and information

- The UV exposure and heat illness guidelines are displayed in a prominent location (e.g. website or noticeboard).
- The daily sun protection times and Sports Medicine Australia heat illness chart are displayed in a prominent location.
- Links to SunSmart [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) and Sports Medicine Australia [sma.org.au](http://sma.org.au) are included on our website.
- Participants are notified at the beginning of August that UV levels will generally be three and above from mid-August to the end of April.

- From May to mid-August participants are reminded to continue to use sun protection measures for extended outdoor training periods and when participating in alpine or water sports.
- UV protection and heat illness prevention messages are included in event programs and newsletters.
- Announcements are made over the PA system to remind all involved of key UV and heat illness prevention measures.

#### 8. First aid

- The first aid kit includes a supply of SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen.
- Trained first aid personnel or sports trainers are present at training and events to manage sunburn and heat illness.
- Contact details of the closest medical assistance are displayed in a prominent location (e.g. first aid room or canteen).
- Any participant feeling discomfort or distress is monitored and evaluated by trained safety personnel.
- Ice, fans and water spray bottles are available as cooling aids.

#### 9. Individual risk factors

- Information on participants' medical conditions and medical history is collected (according to privacy legislation).
- A record of injuries (including heat illness) is kept.
- Age, fitness, skin characteristics, acclimatisation, gender and medical conditions are considered when making decisions.
- If in doubt, an individual is advised to see a medical professional for clearance to participate.

#### For more information and resources

Visit [sunsmart.com.au](http://sunsmart.com.au) or contact the SunSmart program on (03) 9514 6419.

This checklist was copied and updated from the original included in the *UV exposure and heat illness guide* developed by SunSmart and Smartplay and supported by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth) [vichealth.com.au](http://vichealth.com.au), the Department of Planning and Community Development (Sport and Recreation Victoria) [sport.vic.gov.au](http://sport.vic.gov.au), Cancer Council Victoria [cancervic.org.au](http://cancervic.org.au) and Sports Medicine Australia Victorian Branch [vic.sma.org.au](http://vic.sma.org.au).

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