



## Guidelines for Prevention of Heat Injury

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Donvale Football Club has developed this policy in line with the requirements of the EFL and AFL Community Club policies and procedures. Further information can be found on the AFL website [AFLcommunityclub.com.au/administrators/policies&guidelines](http://AFLcommunityclub.com.au/administrators/policies&guidelines) and in the EFL Bylaws under section 9 Match Cancellations Adverse Weather Conditions.

Heat stress and injury can lead to impaired player performance, physical distress e.g. dizziness, headaches, collapse and illness. In its extreme form it can be life threatening.

Preventing heat stress and injury maintains optimum performance and improves recovery.

To prevent heat stress, careful planning and preparation are required. Awareness of potential circumstances that can expose players and an appreciation of the broad variation of individual responses are important.

The following guidelines outline the basic elements for heat stress in match conditions and at training. The Donvale Football Club Coach and / or Team Manager will assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology.

Heat stress management strategies should also be applied at all training sessions, with communication between the Club's trainers and coaching staff being of the utmost importance. In particular clubs should use training sessions to identify high risk players and refine their management of football in hot conditions.

Heat injury is a subject of continuing research and these guidelines will be progressively updated.

Players have a responsibility to ensure that the impact of environmental factors such as extreme heat is not exacerbated by their own conduct. Accordingly, the following general guidelines should be followed.

### Players

- ensure adequate fluid intake prior to game and during game (500-700mls per quarter)
- notify the first aider / trainer and coach if effected by heat or when performance is noticeably effected
- use water and electrolyte drinks
- use pre-game, game and post-game cooling strategies
- do not play in the heat with an infective illness
- apply 30+ sunscreen in sunny conditions



All Clubs competing in a competition administered by the Football Body (EFL) should monitor environmental factors such as extreme heat both in Matches and at any Australian Football training session administered by the Club. The Club should assess the heat stress risk by reviewing information provided by the Bureau of Meteorology. Heat stress management strategies should also be applied at all training sessions administered by the Club.

### **Clubs**

If required:

- the Trainer should inform the parent / guardian of the player to monitor and manage their child for heat stress issues as they arise during a game
- use cooling aids such as ice vests, spray bottles, sponges, fans (in rooms and on interchange bench) and shade
- choose heat permeable jumpers and socks
- research the effect of heat in playing and training conditions and means to manage these environmental conditions
- provide adequate fluids in appropriate bottles
- ensure trainers are fit enough to access as many players as possible during the game
- coordinate training times outside extreme conditions
- have training sessions medically supervised by trainers or first aiders
- provide facilities for player cooling – shade, air conditioning, sprays and fans whether training or playing

Venues are to be equipped with cooling facilities in high risk circumstances – cool rooms (where possible), fans, shade, air conditioning and access to emergency medical facilities.

In addition the following concessions may be introduced:

- increase the number of water carriers to run fluids
- increase the length of intervals to enable teams to leave the field for the shade of the rooms at each break i.e. 25 minutes for ½ time and/or 10 minutes for ¼ & ¾ time
- further reduce length of quarters
- consider postponing or rescheduling games.

If necessary, the EFL may reschedule matches to avoid extremes of heat and allow for increased recovery from those conditions. Further information can be found in the EFL Bylaws under Section 9 Match Cancellation Adverse Weather Conditions.

### **Section 9 of the EFL Bylaws state the following:**

**9.1** If the air temperature, as broadcast by the Bureau of Meteorology, is below 5 degrees Celsius or more than 35 degrees Celsius on a training night, umpires are to sign the attendance book but are not to train.



**9.2** If the air temperature, as broadcast by Bureau of Meteorology, is below 0 degrees Celsius, or more than 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official Eastern Football League match at any grade, no umpire is permitted to officiate in such match and the match shall be cancelled.

**9.3** If the air temperature, as broadcast by the Bureau of Meteorology, is below 5 degrees Celsius or, more than 30 degrees Celsius, but less than 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official Eastern Football League match in the senior, reserve, under 19 or veteran's grades, the game will be cancelled unless, in the opinion of the captains of both clubs, the game should proceed.

**9.4** If the air temperature, as broadcast by the Bureau of Meteorology, is below 5 degrees Celsius or, more than 30 degrees Celsius, but less than 35 degrees Celsius, one hour prior to the scheduled start time of an official Eastern Football League match in any junior grade (under 9 to under 17), the game will be cancelled unless, in the opinion of the coaches of both clubs, the game should proceed.

**9.5** If any game is cancelled in accordance with 9.2, 9.3 or 9.4, a match ratio shall be applied to the ladder for that division in that grade.

**9.6** If any senior, reserve, under 19 or veterans grade game has commenced, and in the opinion of the field umpire(s) the weather conditions have become too hazardous (e.g. lightning and/or thunder in the vicinity, heavy hail), the game will be stopped.

**9.7 (i)** If any junior grade (under 8 to under 17) game has commenced, and in the opinion of either the field umpire(s) or both club coaches, the weather conditions have become too hazardous (e.g. lightning and/or thunder in the vicinity, heavy hail), the game will be stopped.

**(ii)** If the weather conditions improve and in the opinion of the umpires (senior grades) or both field umpire(s) and both coaches (junior grades), the game can recommence within 30 minutes, the following procedures should be adhered to:

**(iii)** In the event a game can recommence within 30 minutes of being stopped:

- the umpire shall instruct each team to return to the field
- the play shall be re-started at the centre square
- the time shall recommence at the time play was stopped and that quarter be finished
- adjustments should then be made to any subsequent quarters and breaks between quarters to ensure the game finishes at the appropriate time (should there be a game following).

**(iv)** Where a team directed to recommence play by a field umpire(s) and the team fails to,



refuses or neglects to recommence play, the team shall be deemed to have forfeited the match.

**(v)** If the game cannot be recommenced, the provisions of by-law 7.5 (b) shall be applied.

**9.8** If two or more games are cancelled or abandoned due to adverse weather in the same grade and division, the round will be declared void and no premiership points, percentages or best and fairest votes will be awarded or applied for that round.

**9.9** If the Board of the league, or its representative, during the review of a match, is not convinced that match should have been cancelled or abandoned or the reason for the cancellation or abandonment was not in good faith, it reserves the right to award points or any penalty as it sees fit.