



**Gymnastics**  
South Australia

# Gymnastics South Australia

# Hot Weather Policy

**Date of Issue: September 2005**

**Last Reviewed: December 2015**

**Controlling Body Approved: GSA Board of Management**

**be active.**

## **1. General Statement**

- 1.1 Gymnastics South Australia Inc. acknowledges that environmental factors such as heat can and do affect the health and safety of all those involved in activities conducted by the Association and its Members.
- 1.2 Gymnastics is an indoor sport and members involved in training and competitions are at risk from dangers relating to high environmental temperatures, but not direct sunlight.
- 1.3 Gymnastics South Australia Inc. encourages all members to adopt and implement this policy (as a minimum) for the safety of those involved in Gymnastics at all levels of participation, across all Gymsports.
- 1.4 This policy governs:
  - Gymnasts/Athletes
  - Club and State Team Coaches
  - Judges/Officials
  - Club Administrators
  - State Team Managers/Chaperones
  - Competition Floor Managers

## **2. Recommended Preparation (according to Sports Med SA)**

- 2.1 Coaches, club administrators and athletes should make themselves aware of expected temperatures for their day of training or competition.
- 2.2 Coaches should ensure athletes have followed the recommended pre-activity fluid intake of at least 500ml (2/3 glasses) ½ to 1 hour prior to training or a competition.
- 2.3 Water should be available at the venue but it is recommended to carry a personal supply of water.
- 2.4 Athletes participating in training and competitions should ensure a sufficient level of fitness has been achieved, however if they are feeling unwell prior, during or following commencement of their activity in hot weather they should seek medical advice.
- 2.5 Coaches/ athletes should prepare personal cooling items such as a spray bottle containing cool water to be sprayed on the face and/or body when required, or a hand towel that can be dampened and applied to the face and/or body when required.
- 2.6 Vigorous exercise in sport places some people at risk of heat illness. Even in cool weather, heat illness may occur in people exercising at high intensity for more than about 45 minutes. Heat illness may also occur with prolonged exposure to hot weather.

### **3. Venue Operator Responsibilities**

- 3.1 Ensure venue airflow is maximised, including the use of air conditioners or fans where practical, during activities.
- 3.2 Ensure a sufficient supply of ambient (room temperature) water is available.
- 3.3 A supply of ice (to suck on or apply at the back of the neck) should be available at all venues.

### **4. Coaches' Responsibilities**

- 4.1 Ascertain whether any athletes in their care have a known medical condition.
- 4.2 Ensure athletes take adequate fluids before, during and after training performing routines.
- 4.3 Encourage fluid intake during breaks.
- 4.4 Ensure adequate rest breaks are taken during training sessions.
- 4.5 Request additional time between performing routines for the purpose of athlete recovery and fluid intake, during competitions.

### **5. Officials' Responsibilities**

- 5.1 Monitor athletes for signs of heat illness.
  - Light headedness, dizziness.
  - Nausea.
  - Obvious fatigue.
  - Cessation of sweating.
  - Obvious loss of skill and coordination/clumsiness or unsteadiness.
  - Confusion.
  - Aggressive or irrational behaviour.
  - Altered consciousness.
  - Collapse.
  - Ashen grey pale skin.
- 5.2 Ensure this policy is adhered to.
- 5.3 The competition manager should be prepared to cancel or discontinue competitions in extreme conditions.

- 5.4 The competition manager should be prepared to allow additional breaks at competitions.
- 5.5 The competition manager and first aid officer should ensure the following measures are followed to assist in decreasing body temperature if symptoms of heat illness are suspected.

***Treating heat illness (as recommended by Sports Med SA)***

- Lay the person down and raise their legs
- Remove as much clothing as possible
- Apply active cooling measures, such as a fan or ice towels, if the core temperature is elevated
- Apply ice packs to the armpits, groin, and neck areas
- Give fluids, if the athlete is conscious
- If the athlete remains seriously ill, confused, vomiting or shows signs of altered consciousness call an ambulance immediately and seek medical help.
- Continue cooling. If available, cool in a shallow canvas/ plastic bath of iced water (5-10 minutes)

**6. Athletes Recommended Fluid Preparation and Replacement Rate**

- 6.1 Athletes' should drink at least 500ml (2 glasses) of water in the 2 hours prior to exercise.
- 6.2 Athletes' engaged in exercise lasting 60 minutes or longer should drink at least 500ml (2 glasses) of water or sports drink per hour.
- 6.3 Athletes' should during training/competition take advantage of all breaks to drink up.
- 6.4 After training/exercise athletes should drink water to replace your fluid deficit to ensure that they are fully re-hydrated.

**7. Cancellations**

*The following clause is to be applied to events and training sessions that are conducted in non air-conditioned venues and facilities:*

- 7.1 If for the preceding two (2) days of a competition event and or training session the maximum temperature reached is 36 degrees Celsius, and the predicted temperature for the competition event and or training session is 36 or above degrees Celsius, the competition and or training session may be rescheduled.

The forecast by which any decisions will be made will be the temperature published by the Bureau of Meteorology <http://www.bom.gov.au/sa/>.

#### References

Sports Medicine Australia. Beat the heat: playing and exercising safely in hot weather fact sheet (2008). <http://sma.org.au/wpcontent/uploads/2009/05/beat-the-heat.pdf> (accessed August 2014).

| <b>Update</b>   | <b>Date of Change</b> | <b>Author/ Modifier</b> |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| Change Section 2 Header to "Recommended Preparation (according to Sports Med)                         | 15/12/2015            | HB                      |
| Section 5.5, after the header Treating heat illness include in brackets (as recommended by Sport med) | 15/12/2015            | HB                      |
| Remove the table on the last page   | 15/12/2015            | HB                      |