



## HOT WEATHER POLICY

**Rationale:** The Eltham Panther Junior Football Club Football (EJFC) has a responsibility to ensure the health and wellbeing of all team officials, volunteers and players. In fulfilling this responsibility, all members have a duty to provide and maintain an environment that is safe and without risks to health.

The EJFC Hot Weather Policy will assist volunteers, players, officials and their families to undertake necessary action in cases of extreme hot weather. This is to prevent injury, and possible death, from heat illness by recognising and managing potentially dangerous heat situations.

**Risks Associated with Hot Weather:** The EJFC recognises that the risk of an elevated body temperature from high intensity sport in a hot environment is significant, and can lead to heat illness presented as heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Symptoms can be worse if fluid replacement during exercise is inadequate which leads to fluid loss and dehydration.

Sports Medicine Australia characterises heat exhaustion by a high heart rate, dizziness, headache, loss of endurance and skill, nausea, clammy and pale skin, and collapse.

Heat stroke is similar to heat exhaustion but with a dry skin, confusion, collapse and possible coma. It may arise in a player who is suffering from heat exhaustion and has persisted in exercise. This is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately.

**Factors Affecting Participants in Hot Weather:** The EJFC recognizes that there are a number of factors that may affect participants during days of extreme heat, including humidity, duration/intensity, timing (between 11am and 3pm) hydration, fitness level, age and gender.

Women, children and the elderly may suffer more in the heat during exercise. This may be due to a greater percentage of body fat in women, and poorly developed sweating mechanism in children.

At ambient temperature greater than or equal to 30 degrees Celsius, children have greater difficulty getting rid of heat than adults.

### **Training and playing in Hot Weather:**

**Shade and drinks:** Coaches of activities that are conducted in hot conditions must provide sufficient shade and regular drinking opportunities. This is particularly critical where the fitness and state of acclimatisation of the young participants are uncertain.

It is recommended that young athletes begin regular drinking routines using water or fluids during training and competition. Regular and effective drinking practices should become habitual to young athletes before, during and after activity. Individuals should monitor weight changes before and after workouts and know the amount of fluid that they are likely to require.

**Modifying or cancelling training or games:** The EJFC and its coaches will agree to stop or modify training when the temperature reaches 30 degrees. This should include removing long distance type running from this training session. If practice matches are to commence these will not go ahead until permission is sought from President in consultation with Football Operations. **On days that are forecast to be over 35°C. ALL training/games will be automatically cancelled.**

The temperature will be measured at the nearest Bureau of Meteorology weather station to where training is to be conducted ½ hour prior to training/playing commencing. For this purpose the EJFC has chosen the temperature at the Viewbank weather station. Please either download the Weather Australia app or check [www.bom.gov.au/vic/observations/melbourne.shtml](http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/observations/melbourne.shtml)

## Take Action

Coaches should not wait until the temperature reaches 30° to act. Coaches will consult with Assistant coaches and/or parents. If a decision needs to be made please call the President or Football Operations and the decision made will be final and there will be no correspondence entered into.

Even at temperatures below 35°C players and officials are to be relocated out of direct sunlight where the training environment creates a serious risk to their health and safety. We still have a duty of care towards all our members.

### Matters for consideration include:

- Radiant heat from particular surfaces like concrete, asphalt, building materials, roofing etc.
- Sun glare off water and windows etc.
- The type of training being performed.
- Modify running drills to short kicking or handball drills until the temperature recedes.
- If a player says they cannot continue or feel sick or dizzy, they must not be forced to keep going. Seek shelter and advice from the team medic.

### Coaches are encouraged to provide:

- Sun screen. (players are encouraged to bring their own)
- Cool clear drinking water.
- Train in shaded areas as much as possible.
- Use shaded areas for rest during drills.
- Common sense.

### Healthy Tips for Hot Weather

- Drink 100-200ml of water at regular intervals, do not allow yourself to become thirsty
- Avoid drinking coffee, tea, and caffeinated soft drinks
- Wear light coloured, loose clothing made of natural fibres wherever possible
- Take regular breaks in a cool place.
- Monitor your physical condition and that of your team mates.

**First aid and treatment:** As per the EJFC/NFL policy, there must be adequate first aid facilities for players, officials and the general public during competitions and training sessions.

Players and officials with any symptoms of heat illness shall immediately cease exercising. They shall have immediate first aid treatment including Strip/Soak/Fan.

- strip off any excess clothing;
- soak with water;
- fan;
- ice placed in groin and armpits is also helpful.

The aim is to reduce body temperature as quickly as possible. The athlete should immediately be referred for treatment by a medical professional.

**Important:** heat exhaustion/stroke can still occur even in the presence of good hydration.

**Additional information** can be obtained from Sports Medicine Australia ([www.sma.org.au](http://www.sma.org.au))