



INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIAL

SAFETY TIPS

[Dehydration - The Facts](#)

[Team and Personal Safety](#)

[Lighting Strikes Quickly](#)

[Umpires Emphasize Safety](#)

[Athletic Injuries](#)

[The National Youth Sports Foundation](#)

DEHYDRATION - THE FACTS

Dehydration can occur in as little as 30 minutes during rigorous exercise and will hamper performance, especially in the heat.

The American College of Sports Medicine encourages frequent drinking before, during, and after training or competition to prevent dehydration and heat stress.

Rehydrate, Don't Dehydrate.

Know the warning signs of dehydration: dizziness and light-headedness; muscle cramps; nausea and headache; dehydration can cause a dangerous increase in body temperature leading to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

To Go Stronger, Last Longer...

Pick the perfect athletic fuel. Carbohydrates are the most efficient source of energy for any kind of physical activity. They are your body's primary fuel for exercise and they require less oxygen to burn than either protein or fat. Yet they are the most scarce energy source in your body. Your body's store of carbs is limited. As this supply is depleted through exercise, it leads to fatigue and a loss of competitive intensity.

If enough carbohydrates are not ingested to replace that which is burned each day, the carbohydrate "fuel tank" will be running on empty during workouts and competition. Performance will suffer.

Respect the Heat.

If you exercise when it's hot outside, you run the risk of becoming dehydrated and collapsing from heat exhaustion. But it's not heat alone that puts you at risk. Humidity also plays a critical role. If temperature and humidity readings indicate a heat warning or heat alert do yourself a favor--wait for the heat wave to pass, or find yourself an air-conditioned gym or workout area.

But when it's necessary to exercise or compete during hot and humid weather, take frequent breaks and always drink before, during, and after exercise. Be sure to check the color of your urine to see if fluid intake is adequate. A clear light-colored urine indicates that you are well-hydrated.

Stay Cooled and Fueled.

Don't wait to become thirsty! You may already be dehydrated. Always drink plenty of fluids to prevent heat illness. Water is a great beverage, especially when nothing else is available. But sometimes water alone is often not enough and you need more.

Properly formulated sports drinks like Gatorade® give you the water you need plus other benefits: carbohydrates (14g per 8oz.), and electrolytes (sodium and potassium) to enhance performance and speed rehydration. By consuming a sports drink like Gatorade® you'll increase the performance benefits over those of water. A 6% carbohydrate solution such as Gatorade® rapidly provides fluids and energy to working muscles.

Research has shown that loading up on carbohydrates at mealtime, "carbo-loading," can help an athlete optimize performance. The carbohydrates provided in sports drinks are simply not enough.

TEAM AND PERSONAL SAFETY

To provide the safest environment for our players, the following rules must be followed:

1. Players need to drink fluids during practice and games. Perspiration is produced from sweat glands in the skin to cool down the body. These fluids must be replaced to maintain the bodies stability. Catchers and pitchers may need to be wetted down based on individual needs.
2. On-deck batters shall prepare themselves in or near the on-deck circle, typically located on the side of the dugout by 1st or 3rd base. On-deck batters are the only players permitted at the on-deck circle.
3. Bats are not to be thrown by any player, especially those who are called out on strikes by an umpire. See your division's rules for the possible sanctions, which can include ejection from the game.
4. Protective equipment must be worn. Helmets are to be worn while at bat and on base. We recommend that cups be worn by all male members of a team. No male member of the Team can catch without use of a cup.
5. Batters should be aware of their proximity to the opposing teams catcher. Do not take practice swings while the catcher is retrieving a passed or loose ball.

LIGHTNING STRIKES QUICKLY

Thunderstorm can come up quickly. Get the players under cover in a building when lightening is in the area. It is not safe to go under trees.

UMPIRES EMPHASIZE SAFETY

The umpires may seem fanatical in their strict enforcement of certain rules, but their objective is maintaining a safe environment for the players. These enforced rules include:

Not allowing players to throw bats or helmets.

Not allowing ANY jewelry to be worn (except medical alerts tags).

Not allowing players to leave their dugouts without permission during a game.

Insisting that catchers and anyone warming up a pitcher be properly equipped.

Insisting that all offensive players on the field wear helmets during an inning.

Not allowing batting practice prior to a game.

Not allowing fake tags on or toward runners.

Maintaining proper decorum by all participants including fans.

ATHLETIC INJURIES

ON FIELD DECISIONS FOR ATHLETIC INJURIES

In General:

Most injuries would be treated no differently whether they happen to a 10-year-old shortstop or to an adult. In evaluating injuries to young athletes, you must remember you are dealing with children. The young player may not be able to easily describe just how he was hurt or how badly he/she is hurt. If they really want to keep playing and think you may take them out of the game to treat an injury, they might not even want to tell you where or how badly it hurts. Therefore, your careful observation and good instincts are very important. **IT IS IMPORTANT THAT COACHES AND PARENTS BE RESPONSIVE TO COMPLAINTS OF INJURY FROM ATHLETES OF ALL AGES. THEY SHOULD BE AWARE THAT ANY ATHLETE WHO IS NOT PLAYING UP TO SKILL LEVEL MAY BE SUFFERING FROM A SIGNIFICANT INJURY.** Be sure that the player's mom and dad are informed of every injury, how it happened, what you did to assist the player, and your recommendation for further actions by the parents. However, while you may rightly feel that not every bruise and sprain should be seen by a physician, the final decision on this must rest squarely on the parent or guardian.

Qualification to Administer First Aid:

It is recognized that few coaches have any training in first aid techniques and that it is impractical to have someone completely experienced in first-aid on duty at all times. However, every effort should be made to determine if any of the team parents or other individuals associated with the team have been trained in basic first aid techniques and to attempt to have them present at all team events.

Coaches are encouraged to avail themselves of basic first aid training that is available through public agencies. Ideally the training should be from an accredited agency such as the American Red Cross. The alternative is to get training by a medical doctor or registered nurse who is

familiar with athletic injuries. Minimum training should include handling of extreme emergencies such as use of mouth-to-mouth resuscitation and external cardiac massage. Until such training is received, coaches should limit themselves to performing only minimum, prudent first aid needed to sustain life. This includes immobilizing the injured area, applying ice and immediately summoning help. **IF YOU ARE NOT QUALIFIED TO DEAL WITH THE SITUATION, DON'T! CALL 911 AND HAVE THE UMPIRE CONTACT THE HEAD UMPIRE, THEN SUPPLY THEM WITH AS MUCH INFORMATION AS POSSIBLE.**

Dealing with Injury Situations on the Field:

Act quickly and shrewdly, assuming every injury is serious until proven otherwise. Keep the person lying down and still. Don't be in a hurry to get them on their feet or off the field. Never move them until you are certain doing so will not further aggravate the injury.

Find the injury and do your best to immobilize it. Reassure the athlete and keep him/her calm. Your first impulse will be to help, but before you do-get a good idea of the problem.

1. Did you see the injury occur? If so, you will have a pretty good idea of what happened. Also look at the injured area to see any signs of swelling, deformity or bruising.

2. Let the players tell you what it feels like. Ask:

* How did it happen?

* Where is the pain?

* Can you move it by yourself?

* Can you sit up, stand, walk?

3. Pinpoint the exact area of pain by applying gentle pressure. Compare injured and non-injured part. Once the area is localized, begin ice treatment immediately. Ice, compression (ace bandage, etc.) and elevation of the injured if possible can reduce pain and swelling. Move player off the field only when you are confident it is safe to do so.

*** In case of head or neck injuries, unconsciousness, or eye injury, treat it as a serious injury until you are assured otherwise by medical personnel.

ALWAYS HAVE ICE COLD PACK AVAILABLE FOR INJURIES

Evaluation of injuries:

Injuries can be classified in three categories: MILD, MODERATE, or SEVERE

Classification and treatment depend upon symptoms and signs. The best way to determine the symptoms and signs is by looking and listening, then by carefully feeling and moving the injured area. While we cannot list every symptom and sign of injury, you can generally rely on the following general statements:

1. If the player is disabled, they injury may be serious. By disabled, we mean the player cannot use that part of the body as it should be used. If an athlete twists an ankle but has only a slight limp, the injury could be mild or moderate. If he or she falls and cannot get up at all, the injury is probably severe.

2. The larger and more immediate the swelling, the more serious the injury because swelling on the outside means bleeding on the inside.
3. A noticeable deformity means a serious injury.
4. Consider all unconsciousness or eye injuries as serious.

DO's and DON'Ts

- * Never give aspirin to cover symptoms of minor injuries
- * Ice an injury for at least 48 hours to allow healing
- * Don't attempt to "work off " an injury. Greater problems can arise from this.
- * When in doubt, it is better to see a physician now than wait until greater damage is done.

Injury Recuperation

After an injury, do not return an athlete to participation until they are truly ready. It is recommended that for minor injuries, the coach get a note from the parent releasing the child for participation again. For more serious injuries or in situations where the player has a physical condition, which brings doubt about his/her fitness for play, insist on a medical release from a competent medical authority. Once the medical waiver is obtained, a wise coach will administer functional tests to determine the exact status of the athlete.

You can make lots of mistakes in lots of areas as a youth coach and still be very successful; but safety is not one of those areas. Even one mistake can have disastrous repercussions.

THINK SAFETY EVERY MINUTE YOU ARE WITH YOUR PLAYERS. SAFETY IS ONE OF YOUR MOST IMPORTANT JOBS!

For more information about sports safety go the

THE NATIONAL YOUTH SPORTS SAFETY FOUNDATION at <http://www.nyssf.org/>.

The National Youth Sports Safety Foundation, Inc. (NYSSF) is a national non-profit, educational organization dedicated to reducing the number and severity of injuries youth sustain in sports and fitness activities. The Foundation is the only organization in the country solely dedicated to this objective.

© 2004 78th PYC All Rights Reserved