



WOODVILLE LACROSSE CLUB Inc

Established 1899

EXTREME WEATHER POLICY

Effective Date: 24 October 2011

Review Date: 24 October 2012

PURPOSE

This Extreme Weather Policy applies to all lacrosse games and practices within the direct control of Woodville Lacrosse Club. This includes but is not limited to:

- Junior practice and games.
- School Carnivals and clinics.
- Games against visiting teams.

The Woodville Lacrosse Club are expected to be aware of this Policy and use it as a guideline for managing their own practices and events during hot weather.

Objective

Lacrosse is traditionally a winter sport but is increasingly being played year round.

Accordingly the Woodville Lacrosse Club will exercise a reasonable duty of care for all players, umpires, referees, officials and spectators to ensure their wellbeing when participating in all lacrosse activities.

This Policy has been developed to assist the Woodville Lacrosse Club to identify the risks of physical activity in extreme hot weather, and the actions that need to be undertaken to minimise those risks.

Strategy

The heat will affect not all participants in the same manner.

No player or official should be forced to participate in any lacrosse activity in conditions when he / she feels there may be a risk to his / her personal well-being. In the case of junior players, the opinions of the player's parents must also be taken into consideration.

Risks associated with hot weather:

High intensity exercise in a hot environment can lead to:

- Dehydration
- Heat exhaustion
- Heat stroke

Dehydration

During exercise, fluid loss occurs. If adequate fluid is not replaced this may lead to heat exhaustion and heat stroke.

Heat Exhaustion

A lack of fluid replacement may lead to heat exhaustion. Heat exhaustion is characterised by:

- High heart rate
- Dizziness
- Headache
- Loss of endurance/skill/confusion
- Nausea
- Clammy skin, pale in colour
- Cramps

Heat Stroke

Severe dehydration may lead to heat stroke. This is characterised similar to heat exhaustion but with a dry skin, confusion and player collapsing.

This is a potentially fatal condition and must be treated immediately by a medical professional.

Factors affecting participation in hot weather

There are a number of factors that will affect participation during days of extreme heat. These include the following:

Humidity

The greater the humidity, the harder it is for the body to cool off through the evaporation of sweat.

Duration/Intensity

The greater the duration and intensity of the activity, the greater the risk of heat related symptoms.

Fitness Level

Participants who may be overweight and unconditioned for the activity will be more susceptible to heat stress.

Age and Gender

Women may suffer more during activity in the heat due to their greater percentage of body fat. Young children are especially at risk. Children have poorly developed sweating mechanism, essential for cooling the body, prior to puberty. Children also take longer to acclimatise to participating in hot conditions than adults. Coaches need to ensure that children do not over-exert themselves especially when undertaking exercise for 30 minutes or greater. Veteran participants may also not cope well when undertaking activity in the heat.

Time of Event

During periods of hot weather, the hottest part of the day should be avoided (usually 11:00am – 3:00pm).

Other Factors

Other factors that may affect participants are any predisposed medical condition and the ability of participants to gain access to fluids during activity.

Procedures

Team Management and Officials should be aware of the risks associated with playing in extreme temperatures (hot and cold) at all times, not just under the specific circumstance outlined here.

Roles and Responsibility

All those associated with the management of a game or practice should ensure that all those involved wear appropriate clothing and take reasonable measures to combat the effects of the weather, even on days not regarded as “extreme”. This includes the wearing of appropriate clothing and headwear, adequate hydration, rest periods, use of sunscreen, use of shaded areas and monitoring of individuals.

It must be recognised that Officials – Umpires/Referees, Bench Officials and scorers for example – are part of the game and all measures instituted for players should also be applied to this group.