

Prevention, Identification and Management of Heat-Related Illnesses

Collier County Public Schools Department of Student Services

Heat emergencies can occur when an individual is involved in strenuous activity for prolonged periods in very high heat. Signs or impending heat exhaustion include:

- pale, moist skin,
- headache
- dizziness
- nausea
- fatigue
- increased heart rate, low blood pressure
- elevated temperature
- profuse sweating
- cramps

Signs of a more serious heat emergency may include:

- hot, dry, red skin
- weakness and fatigue
- hyperventilation
- high fever
- vomiting
- confusion
- loss of consciousness

Prevention: Our goal is to prevent heat emergencies before they occur. Students should be provided with and encouraged to drink water before, during and after outdoor activities. If students are outdoors in high temperatures for prolonged periods, regular rest breaks are needed to prevent overexertion and for additional hydration. Activities should occur in shaded areas whenever possible.

Student Athletes: Additional measures are necessary to prevent heat emergencies in student athletes. All Athletic Directors, athletic trainers, and select physical education teachers have received specific educational information, including the DVD, “Heat Emergency Preparedness for Athletes” from the Florida High School Athletic Association. It is important that this DVD and written guidelines regarding safety precautions are reviewed with coaching staff so that dangerous situations are avoided. Other steps the district takes to prevent heat emergencies in student athletes include:

- Having adequate supplies of water and other fluids available at all practices and sporting events
- Frequent hydration breaks
- Principals, coaches, and athletic directors receive an annual reminder of best practices to be followed. They are well-aware of preventive measures, signs and symptoms, and management of heat related illnesses.
- Certified Athletic Trainers are present at all football practices and events

Management of Heat-Related Emergencies: Guidelines for the management of heat stroke and heat exhaustion are contained on page 32 of the Emergency Guidelines for Schools, 3rd Edition, included in the School Health Services Manual, available on the district intranet or in hard copy in each school’s clinic.

http://www.collier.k12.fl.us/Student_services/intranetdocs/School%20Health%20Manual%202007/Chapter%205%20-%20Emergency%20Guidelines/H%20-%20EMSCguide.pdf

If a student displays signs of possible heat exhaustion or heat stroke, consult the school nurse and begin treatment immediately, according to the above guidelines.