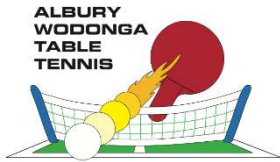


## HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES

### Contents

1	INTRODUCTION .....	2
2	GUIDELINES STATEMENT .....	2
3	SCOPE.....	2
4	RECOGNISING EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS .....	3
5	RISK FACTORS FOR EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS .....	3
6	MITIGATION STRATEGIES .....	5
7	ACTIVATING THESE GUIDELINES .....	6
8	ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AWTTA PERSONNEL .....	7
9	GUIDELINES PROMOTION.....	7
10	REVIEW PROCESS.....	7



## 1 INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines outline the approach taken by Albury Wodonga Table Tennis Association Incorporated (AWTTA) to protecting the safety of participants during hot weather. Warm to hot weather creates a risk that participants may experience a form of exertional heat illness, such as muscle cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion and even heat stroke. The AWTTA stadium is an air-conditioned premises.

The aim of AWTTA's Hot Weather Guidelines is to:

- Protect the health, safety and wellbeing of everyone who participates, including volunteers, families, coaches and officials.
- Detail strategies for participation to continue with appropriate mitigation and risk management strategies in place.

Should a person wish to make any enquiries in relation to these Guidelines, please contact the AWTTA Secretary.

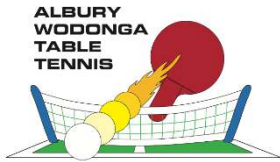
## 2 GUIDELINES STATEMENT

AWTTA is committed to ensuring our sport is accessible to everyone and we take every opportunity to provide the highest level of service to all members and participants. AWTTA has a duty of care to protect the health, safety and wellbeing of participants, during warm to very hot weather and heatwaves. When there is a risk of exertional heat illness, AWTTA commits to acting in the best interest of all participants by implementing mitigation strategies.

## 3 SCOPE

These Guidelines apply to all people involved in our organisation, including committee members, volunteers, coaches, officials, participants, parents and guardians. It covers all activities in which people are physically active. It covers situations where people are inactive yet situated in hot, sunny conditions, such as volunteers, parents, spectators and coaches.

These Guidelines are designed to reduce the risks and prevalence of injury and illness which can occur when people play sport during warm to very hot weather conditions.



## 4 RECOGNISING EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS

Exertional heat illness can be categorised from mild to severe, including muscle cramps, heat syncope (fainting), heat exhaustion, heat injury and heat stroke (life threatening).

Associated signs and symptoms can include:

- Headache.
- Light-headedness and dizziness.
- Nausea and vomiting.
- Fatigue.
- Change in personality (disorientation, confusion, irrational behaviour, irritability).
- Change in performance (unsteadiness, loss of balance and coordination, loss of skills).
- Seizures.
- Loss of consciousness.
- Cardiac arrest.

People to whom these Guidelines apply need to be aware that exertional heat illness can occur whenever there are actual or potential environmental, individual and organisational risk factors, and it is in these circumstances that AWTTA is committed to reducing the risk of occurrence.

**NOTE:** Exertional heat illness can be life threatening, therefore, if a person is concerned about an immediate risk to an individual's health and safety, the person must phone "000" (or "112" from a mobile when you are out of your service provider's coverage area) as soon as practicable.

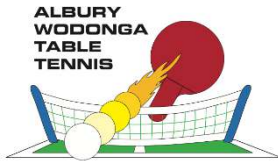
## 5 RISK FACTORS FOR EXERTIONAL HEAT ILLNESS

AWTTA recognises that multiple factors pose a risk to the health and safety of participants, including the environment, factors specific to individuals and factors specific to our sport.

### **Environmental Risk Factors**

Climate related environmental risk factors can increase the risk of illness and injury. Risk factors include:

- Air temperature.
- Humidity (it becomes more difficult to regulate body temperature in higher humidity due to a decrease in sweat evaporation).
- Wind speed (this affects the rate of water evaporation).
- Radiant temperature (such as radiant heat from ground surface).



## Individual Risk Factors

The following individual risk factors are relevant to our participants. These factors need to be understood by everyone involved at AWTTA

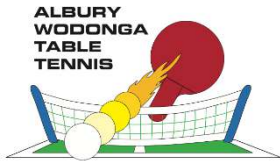
- **Age:** Children and adults over 65 are considered at greater risk.
- **Poor physical condition:** Some people may experience heat illness at lower temperatures due to exercising beyond current capacity.
- **Inadequate acclimatization:** This occurs when our body is not conditioned to warm and/or humid climates.
- **Illness or medical conditions:** Individuals may be more affected by heat due to medications and illness.
- **Dehydration and electrolyte imbalances:** Good hydration is needed to keep your body's core temperature down during sport or hot conditions. You must rehydrate to compensate for what the body loses in sweat.

## Sport Risk Factors

Sport risk factors are specific characteristics of the sport activity which can contribute to an increased risk of exertional heat illness. The following risk factors are relevant to Table Tennis. Many of these risk factors can be adjusted to reduce some of the risk of exertional heat illness.

Risk factors include:

- **Excessive clothing and athletic gear** can increase the risks of the body's core temperature rising.
- **Lack of awareness and education of exertional heat illness**
- **Venue and location.** The indoor stadium is located in an area that can exceed 36 degrees, heat inside the stadium can be humid if not controlled by the installed air conditioning.
- **Level and duration of activities.** The longer the activity and the more intense, the higher the risk.
- **Time of play.** Risks are highest between 11am and sunset, however the stadium is air conditioned which should offset this factor.



## 6 MITIGATION STRATEGIES

The risks of exertional heat illness being suffered by participants can be reduced through a range of mitigation strategies. These strategies can be implemented by everyone. In particular, individuals with a duty of care to participants should consider appropriate mitigation strategies during warm to very hot weather conditions.

AWTTA will implement the following sport modification parameters if there is a risk of exertional heat illness to participants. It is the responsibility of Coordinators, Committee members, Coaches, Players and Parents to implement the following strategies where relevant.

### **Hydration**

- Promoting hydration strategies including drinking fluids before, during and after physical activity and reducing intake of sugar sweetened beverages, coffee and alcohol.

### **Water and cooling**

- Encouraging participants to bring additional drinking water.
- Chilled water is available at the stadium via a water cooler, or for purchase via the Canteen.
- Encourage participants to bring cold towels.

### **Air Conditioning and Shade**

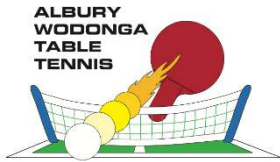
- The stadium playing area is air conditioned to reduce heat, if required.
- The stadium club room is air conditioned to allow players to cool down when not playing.
- There is an undercover area outside available for any players to use.

### **Rule changes**

- Mandating player rotations
- Mandating rest and drink breaks
- Allowing for appropriate clothing or uniform modifications where required
- Modify format if player/s elects not to participate.

### **Incidents**

- Seek to have qualified first aid personnel on site when people are physically active during hot weather.
- Monitor players closely and recognise signs and symptoms of exertional heat illness.



## 7 ACTIVATING THESE GUIDELINES

These Hot Weather Guidelines must be referred to if it is determined by AWTTA that there is a risk of exertional heat illnesses during immediate or upcoming matches, games, training sessions, activities, competitions or events.

Climate forecasts are available up to seven days before an event. We will monitor forecast ambient temperatures so that appropriate plans and communications can take place.

AWTTA will use the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) as the source of climactic information. All committee members, coaches and officials should ensure they have access to:

- The BoM Weather smartphone app <http://www.bom.gov.au/app/>. This provides information on ambient temperature and Apparent Temperature (AT) which includes air temperature and humidity and appears on smartphone app as e.g. 'feels like 20.1C'.
- The BoM website: Forecast Summary of Victorian Towns <http://www.bom.gov.au/vic/forecasts/towns.shtml>

If climate conditions (like heatwaves) are likely to pose an increased risk to people's health, the Department of Health and Human Services will issue a Heat Health Alert. <https://www2.health.vic.gov.au/public-health/environmental-health/climate-weather-and-public-health/heatwaves-and-extreme-heat/heat-health-alert-status>.

At least two Club emails will be registered to receive Heat Health Alert notifications.

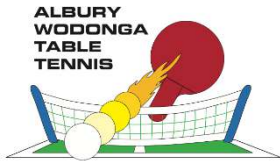
Where forecast or current ambient temperatures are in the following ranges:

- **31C to 35C (humidity exceeds 50%)**, AWTTA will actively monitor the health and well-being of all participants and implement relevant mitigation strategies.
- **>36C (humidity exceeds 30%)**, AWTTA will consider suspension, postponement or cancellation of play. If a decision is made to continue, then relevant mitigation strategies will be implemented.

### **Making decisions**

*The following personnel are responsible for implementing mitigation strategies at various times during Stadium usage:*

- *Pennant / Keenagers / Group - Session Coordinator.*
- *Training – Session Coordinator and Coach.*
- *Future Events – Committee.*



## 8 ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF AWTTA PERSONNEL

Personnel involved in protecting participants from exertional heat illness include the committee members, parents and volunteers. Those people have responsibilities in relation to protection of all members and are expected to:

- Understand the risks of exertional heat illness, as appropriate to their role.
- Appropriately act on any concerns raised by participants about exertional heat illness.
- Know and follow guidelines in relation to the care of all members during warm to very hot weather, and at times of extended periods of exceptionally high day and night-time temperatures (heatwaves).
- Promptly communicate changes to participants via email to members and update on Club website [www.awtta.org.au](http://www.awtta.org.au).

## 9 GUIDELINES PROMOTION

These Guidelines will be made available to all members via the Club website: [www.awtta.org.au/forms and documents](http://www.awtta.org.au/forms-and-documents)

## 10 REVIEW PROCESS

These Guidelines will be reviewed by the AWTTA Committee on a biennial basis.

If you would like to provide AWTTA with any feedback or suggestions to improve these Guidelines, please contact AWTTA Secretary

### References

*AWTTA acknowledges the assistance provided by the Victorian Government (Sport and Recreation Victoria) in developing this resource for adaptation by sporting clubs and associations.*

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