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Advice to athletes

Attention: Southampton AC Athletes at SAL Bournemouth meet
16th July 2022

The weekend forecast is for very high temperatures across the South of England. Here are some tips to keep you safe and some signs to look out for.

When you exercise in hot weather, keep these precautions in mind:

- **Know your fitness level.** If you're unfit, be extra cautious when working out in the heat. Your body may have a lower tolerance to the heat. Reduce your exercise intensity and take frequent breaks.
- **Drink plenty of fluids.** Dehydration is a key factor in heat illness. Help your body sweat and cool down by staying well-hydrated with water. *Don't wait until you're thirsty to drink fluids.* If you plan to exercise intensely, consider a sports drink instead of water. Sports drinks can replace the sodium, chloride and potassium you lose through sweating. Avoid alcoholic drinks because they can actually promote fluid loss.
- **Dress appropriately.** Lightweight, loose fitting clothing helps sweat evaporate and keeps you cooler. Avoid dark colours, which can absorb heat. If possible, wear a light-colored, wide-brimmed hat.
- **Avoid midday sun.** If possible, exercise in shady areas,
- **Wear sunscreen.** A sunburn decreases your body's ability to cool itself and increases the risk of skin cancer.
- **Understand your medical risks.** Certain medical conditions or medications can increase your risk of a heat-related illness. If you plan to exercise in the heat, talk to your doctor about precautions.

Pay attention to warning signs

During hot-weather exercise, watch for signs and symptoms of heat-related illness. If you ignore these symptoms, your condition can worsen, resulting in a medical emergency. Signs and symptoms may include:

- Muscle cramps
- Nausea or vomiting
- Weakness
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Excessive sweating
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Confusion
- Irritability
- Low blood pressure
- Increased heart rate
- Visual problems

If you develop any of these symptoms, you must lower your body temperature and get hydrated right away. Stop exercising immediately and get out of the heat. If possible, have someone stay with you who can help monitor your condition.

Contact one of the SAC team managers immediately.

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/fitness/in-depth/exercise/art-20048167>