



**Werribee Table Tennis Association Inc**  
**REGISTRATION NUMBER A0014877Z**

# **HOT WEATHER GUIDELINES**

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

These Guidelines outline WTTA's approach to protecting the safety of participants during hot weather. Warm to hot weather creates a risk that participants may experience in the form of exertional heat illness, such as muscle cramps, fainting, heat exhaustion and even heat stroke.

The aim of WTTA'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 WTTA via email: [enquiries@wttasn.au](mailto:enquiries@wttasn.au)

## 2. GUIDELINES STATEMENT

WTTA 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. WTTA promotes the health, safety and wellbeing of participants, during warm to very hot weather and heatwaves. When there is a risk of exertional heat illness, WTTA commits to acting in the best interest of all participants by implementing mitigation strategies.

**Please note that the onus is on the individual(s) to satisfy their own health requirements.**

## 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 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 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 WTTA 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, first radio Eagle Stadium's Centre Management via our issued radio located at the grade supervisor's desk. Eagle Stadium's Centre Management (first aid officers) to assess the need to call "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

WTTA 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).
- Radiant temperature (such as radiant heat from wall surfaces).

## Individual Risk Factors

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

- **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. Indoor venues with low air flow or without air conditioning can also present a risk.
- 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 10pm.

## 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. Individuals with a duty of care to participants should consider appropriate mitigation strategies during warm to very hot weather conditions.

WTTA will implement the following sport modification parameters if there is a risk of exertional heat illness to participants.

## **Hydration**

- Promoting hydration strategies including drinking to quench thirst 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.
- Increasing availability and access to water for drinking from the stadium's water fountain.
- Encourage participants to bring ice slurry drinks in non glass containers and towels to wipe down.
- Grade supervisors to allow towel down and intake of fluids at any time during a game i.e., after every point if required and not just every 6 points as per our rules when the temperature is over 30 degrees as indicated on scoreboard.
- Encourage players not to play 2 consecutive games to enable rehydration and recovery.

## **Cooler Areas**

- Increasing frequency of breaks for participants to take refuge on a seat in cooler areas like the corridor.

## **Rescheduling / timing changes**

- Changing the time of the event to a cooler part of the day.
- Postponing to future dates.
- Increasing frequency and length of breaks.
- Shorten duration of matches and exclude higher intensity activities if coaching.

## **Rule changes**

- Reducing length of matches, by the best of 3 instead of the best of 5.
- Recommend player rotations.
- Recommend rest and drink breaks.
- Allowing for appropriate clothing or uniform modifications where required.

## **Incidents**

- Ensure professional first aid responders, or qualified first aid personnel, are always on site when people are physically active during hot weather.
- Heightened awareness from volunteers, general members, committee members and players will ensure players are closely monitored to 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 WTTA that there is a risk of exertional heat illnesses during immediate or upcoming matches, games, training sessions, activities, competitions or events.

**Eagle Stadiums hot weather policy overrules ours when the temperature is 39.9 degrees Celsius in that we are sent off the court and will only return if the temperature is below 39.9 degrees celsius.**

Forecast or current ambient court temperature	Actions for consideration - based on section 6.
26°C-30°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Promote hydration strategies.</li> </ul>
31°C-35°C	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Be aware of the health and well-being of all participants.</li> <li>Be cautious of over exertion during training.</li> <li>Promote hydration strategies and provide additional water and more breaks.</li> <li>Consider less intense and shorter duration activities and by agreement of both team captains and the grade supervisor matches to be played as the best of 3.</li> </ul>
>36°C  Heat Health Alert issued for relevant area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If continuing, implement relevant mitigation strategies.</li> <li>Be aware of the health and well-being of all participants.</li> <li>Be cautious of over exertion during training.</li> <li>Promote hydration strategies and provide additional water.</li> <li>Ensure participants have easy access to cooler areas such as the corridor.</li> <li>Consider less intense and shorter duration activities.</li> </ul>

### Making decisions

*Who is responsible for implementing mitigation strategies at various times during Table Tennis? Consider all scenarios where people are physically active including packing and unpacking:*

- *Club competitions – Supervisors in conjunction with committee member(s), playing officials are responsible for decisions.*
- *Training – Coaches, committee member(s), Supervisors are responsible for making decisions.*

## 8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF WTTA PERSONNEL

Personnel involved in protecting participants from exertional heat illness include the committee members, parents and volunteers. Those people have responsibilities in relation to the 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 prior to the commencement of play and through to the participants via text message.

## 9. GUIDELINES PROMOTION

These Guidelines will be made available to all members via website, Stack Team App.

## 10. REVIEW PROCESS

This guideline will be reviewed by the WTTA Committee on an annual basis.

If you would like to provide WTTA with any feedback or suggestions to improve these Guidelines, please contact: [enquiries@wttasn.au](mailto:enquiries@wttasn.au)

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### **DISCLAIMER:**

*While all care has been taken in the preparation of this guideline, none of the author(s) or WTTA including its officers, employees and agents, make any representation or warranty as to, or take any responsibility for, the accuracy, reliability, completeness or currency of any information or recommendations contained in this guideline, nor its usefulness in achieving any purpose. WTTA is not liable to users of this guideline for any loss or damage however caused resulting from the use of this guideline and accepts no responsibility for the accuracy of the information or your reliance upon it. WTTA recommends users seek independent medical and/or legal advice. WTTA reserves all of its rights. The onus is on the individual to monitor their own health and decide on their ability to participate on their own free will. Adults/parents/carers will make decisions on behalf of their children or members' welfare.*



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*Vicsport developed this resource utilising and adapting content from the Australian Centre for Research into Injury in Sport and its Prevention (ACRISP), document and content analysis of heat policies and guidelines in Victorian community sport (2017).*

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