

# SUN & HEAT EXPOSURE

A PARENT'S GUIDE TO SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, TREATMENT AND PREVENTION

## SUN & HEAT EXPOSURE

Many athletes focus on proper conditioning and training to avoid injuries, but not enough of them consider the importance of preventing skin cancer.

According to the American Cancer Society, most of the more than 1 million cases of non-melanoma skin cancer diagnosed yearly in the United States are sun related. Melanoma, the most serious type, will account for about 7,800 of the 10,600 deaths due to skin cancer each year.

Yet despite documented benefits, many athletes do not use sunscreen during outdoor practices or games. In one study of 139 athletes, 46 percent blamed lack of availability, and 33 percent thought they didn't need it because of various misconceptions. Others said they didn't consider the weather hot enough for sunburn.

Athletes who play in the daytime are exposed to a tremendous amount of UV light.

The American Academy of Dermatology recommends avoiding sun exposure from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m., precisely the time many teams are playing or practicing. Sweating makes the risk worse. Perspiration on the skin lowers the minimal erythema dose, the lowest UV exposure needed to turn the skin barely pink.

### TO LOWER YOUR RISK OF SKIN CANCER, FOLLOW THESE GUIDELINES:

- Whenever possible, try to schedule games, practices or physical activity before 11 a.m. or after 4 p.m., when the sun's rays are not as powerful.
- When taking a break, try to sit or stand in the shade. If the field has no shade, bring an umbrella or portable tent.
- Use sunscreen! At least 15 to 30 minutes before going outside, apply a broad spectrum sunscreen with an SPF of 15 or higher.

- Reapply sunscreen to all exposed skin 15 to 30 minutes after sun exposure begins and then every two hours.
- Athletes should choose a waterproof or sweatproof sunscreen.
- For athletic attire, choose materials that are light and cool, such as cotton or lightweight synthetics. Shirts with collars can help protect your neck.

Coaches, especially, should encourage younger players to protect their skin. They can set an example by using sunscreen themselves at games and practices.



(CONTINUED ON BACK)

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# SUN & HEAT EXPOSURE (CONT.)

## HEAT ILLNESS PREVENTION

### RISKS:

- High intensity exercise
- Hot/humid weather
- Overweight
- Out of shape
- Unacclimated

### KEEP COOL:

- The cooler you stay the harder you'll play
- Frequent water breaks and open water policies. Fluid readily available. Get in shade during breaks whenever possible

### HYDRATION IS KEY:

- Right amount and type of fluids
- 7-10 ounces before
- 10-12 ounces every 15 minutes
- 20-24 ounces/pound lost in practice

### GEAR UP:

- Wear light colored, breathable materials
- Use sun screen

## WATCH YOUR BUDDIES FOR THE FOLLOWING SIGNS:

- Confusion/irrational behavior
- Headache
- Sluggish
- Cramping
- Vomiting
- Stopped sweating
- Recently ill

## FIRST AID TIPS:

- Change to dry clothes if they get soaked
- Ice/cold towels on neck/armpits, groin, etc., if getting overheated. Move to cooler/shaded area
- Remove wet, soaked socks, shoes and clothing to allow cooling
- If disoriented, cramping severely or have stopped sweating, call 911

## SPORTSCARE AT SSM CARDINAL GLENNON

Cardinal Glennon SportsCare is the premier pediatric sports medicine provider in St. Louis and St. Charles. We provide exclusive, direct access to comprehensive medical care for young athletes.

By working with multiple specialists and care partners, we guarantee your child will get the top care that is best suited to treat their unique injury, improving recovery time and outcome. Many of our services are offered in multiple locations so your child can even be treated close to home.

Specialists your child has access to through SportsCare include orthopedists, pulmonologists, cardiologists, radiologists, neurologists, emergency medicine physicians, adolescent medicine physicians, rehabilitation specialists, physical therapists, nutritionists and pediatric psychologists.

Partners your child has access to through SportsCare include SSM Cardinal Glennon Children's Medical Center, SSM Orthopedics, SSM Physical Therapy and SLUCare, the physicians of Saint Louis University.

We also keep kids in the game through educational programs and support for parents, coaches and athletes that focus on injury prevention, proper technique and overall athletic health. SportsCare is a young athlete's best connection to sports medicine and athletic well-being.

For more information about Cardinal Glennon SportsCare or to find a specialist for your athlete, call us at **314-577-5640** or visit us at [cardinalglennon.com/sportscare](http://cardinalglennon.com/sportscare).



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St. Clare Health Center  
St. Joseph Health Center  
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