



University of Santo Tomas Health Service



GUIDELINES FOR SCHOOL ACTIVITIES DURING HIGH HEAT INDEX

Purpose: These guidelines aim to protect students and university staff from heat-related illnesses during periods of high heat index.

HEAT INDEX THRESHOLDS:

- **27-32°C: CAUTION**

Fatigue is possible with prolonged exposure and activity. Continuing activity could lead to heat cramps.

Action Plans:

1. Remind everyone to follow precautionary measures to avoid heat-related illnesses. (Refer to Health Advisory on preventing heat-related illnesses).
2. **Limit strenuous activities outdoor.** When possible, **reschedule outdoor activities during cooler times of the day** such as early mornings or evenings.
3. Increase frequency of hydration breaks and allow participants to seek shade when needed.
4. Provide ample water, seating, and cooling stations at outdoor events.
5. Encourage participants to use wet towels or misting fans to cool down during outdoor activities.
6. Have a designated cooling area readily available in case of emergencies.
7. Train staff to identify and respond to signs of heat-related illnesses (i.e., heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke).
8. Call loc 8211 for emergency medical assistance.

- **33-41°C: EXTREME CAUTION**

Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are possible. Continuing activity could lead to heat stroke.

Action Plans:

1. Remind everyone to follow precautionary measures to avoid heat-related illnesses. (Refer to Health Advisory on preventing heat-related illnesses).
2. **Modify or relocate outdoor activities to air-conditioned spaces.**
3. **Reschedule or cancel all strenuous physical activities outdoors or indoors in non-airconditioned facilities (covered court or gyms) from 10am-4pm.**
4. **Shorten outdoor activities** with close monitoring of participants are permissible during cooler times of the day.

5. **Adapt activities to reduce exertion during PE classes.** Focus on theory, low impact exercises, or indoor activities.
6. **For athletes' training, follow heat acclimatization guidelines¹ for sports and physical activities.**
7. Increase the frequency of hydration breaks and allow participants to seek shade when needed.
8. Provide ample water, seating, and cooling stations at outdoor events.
9. Encourage participants to use wet towels or misting fans to cool down during outdoor activities.
10. Have a designated cooling area readily available in case of emergencies.
11. Train staff to identify and respond to signs of heat-related illnesses. (heat cramps, heat exhaustion, heat stroke)
12. Call loc 8211 for emergency medical assistance.

- **42-51°C: DANGER**

Heat cramps and heat exhaustion are likely; heat stroke is probable with continued exposure.

Action Plans:

1. Remind everyone to follow precautionary measures to avoid heat-related illnesses. (Refer to health advisory on preventing heat-related illnesses).
2. **Reschedule or cancel all outdoor activities.**
3. **Reschedule or cancel all strenuous physical activities** done in indoor non-airconditioned facilities.
4. Encourage everyone to stay indoors in a cool environment.

- **>51°C: EXTREME DANGER**

Heat stroke is imminent.

Action Plans:

1. Remind everyone to follow precautionary measures to avoid heat-related illnesses. (Refer to health advisory on preventing heat-related illnesses)
2. **Reschedule or cancel all outdoor activities.**
3. **Reschedule or cancel all strenuous physical activities** done in indoor non-airconditioned facilities.
4. Encourage everyone to stay indoors in a cool environment.


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¹ <https://www.azdhs.gov/documents/preparedness/epidemiology-disease-control/extreme-weather/heat/managing-extreme-heat-recommendations-for-schools.pdf>