HOT WEATHER and YOUR HEALTH

Temperatures on our September 12 race morning usually range from the high 60s to low 70s. However, twice in the past 10 years the mercury has reached the high 80s to low 90s, worsened by high humidity. The key difference between the classic Runner’s Rite of Spring and this year’s Runner’s Delight of Fall lies in the preparation phase. The heat and humidity of summer training poses several challenges, including increased risk for becoming dehydrated and for developing dangerously high core body temperatures. Our medical team would like to share some advice to help keep everyone healthy and on track for a successful run this Fall.

Best Ways to Train in Hot Weather:

● First, consider training indoors when the heat and humidity are high. To help determine if you should run outside, please refer to https://www.weather.gov/ama/heatindex about how to assess the impact of weather while you train.
● Do trial runs under similar temperatures (a technique called acclimation) which can be very helpful to ensure that you have become accustomed to hot conditions.
● Try pre-cooling by wearing a cooling vest or cold towel on your neck during pre-run warm-up.
● Make sure that you are well hydrated prior to the run which will help with your cooling mechanisms.
● How much to drink during and after a run varies by individual runner and also depends on length of run and how much you are sweating. This summer try to drink 6 ounces of water every 15 minutes while running, and if running longer than one hour it is recommended to also add electrolyte drinks into your in-run or post-run hydration regimen. Replenishing with electrolytes can help prevent a dangerous complication (low sodium level or “hyponatremia”) of drinking too much water.

How to Stay Cool During Your Run:

● Drink plenty of fluids. Drink before (>1 hour prior to race), during, and after your workout. You can tell you are getting enough if your urine is light or very pale yellow.
● Do not drink alcohol, caffeine, or drinks with a lot of sugar, such as soda. They can cause you to lose fluids by triggering GI fluid loss.
● Water is your best choice for less-intense workouts. If you will be exercising for a couple of hours, you may want to choose a sports or electrolyte drink. These replace salts and minerals as well as fluids. Choose lower-calorie options which contain less sugar.
● Make sure the water or sports drinks are cool, but not too cold. Very cold drinks may cause stomach cramps.
● Limit your training on very hot days. Try training in the early morning or later at night.
● Choose the right clothing for your activity. Lighter colors and wicking fabrics are good choices.
● Protect yourself from direct sun with sunglasses and a hat. Do not forget sunscreen (SPF 30 or higher).
● Rest often in shady areas or try to stay on the shady side of a walking or hiking trail.

Be Aware of Signs of Heat Illness:

● EVEN TOP ATHLETES IN SUPERB CONDITION CAN GET HEAT ILLNESS!

Learn what your risks are and what symptoms to look for:

● Early signs - warning signs - slow down and hydrate.
  ○ Heavy sweating
  ○ Muscle cramps (can be the first sign of overheating)
  ○ Tiredness
- Thirsty
- Later signs - heat exhaustion - stop the run and find shade and water to rest.
  - Weakness
  - Dizziness
  - Headache
  - Nausea or vomiting
  - Cool, moist/clammy skin
  - Dark urine
- Emergency - heatstroke. When the body temperature rises above 104°F (40°C). Heatstroke is a life-threatening condition and needs to be treated immediately. Please seek immediate attention.
  - Fever (over 104°F [40°C])
  - Red, hot, dry skin
  - Rapid, shallow breathing
  - Rapid, weak pulse
  - Irrational behavior
  - Extreme confusion
  - Seizure
  - Loss of consciousness

When and How To Ask For Help:

- For our medical operations this year we have enhanced our services in anticipation of more potential for heat related illness. On our course we have always had a strong medical presence and will continue to work hard to anticipate your health concerns.
- If you feel any symptoms of heat exhaustion or heat stroke, please seek out assistance from anyone nearby as quickly as possible

The CB10 Medical Team sincerely hopes for all to have a safe and successful 2021 event!

-Dr. David Martin, Dr. Betty Wang, Rachel Miller, PT, Polly Porter, PA-C, Phil Pommerening

Additional references:

https://www.cdc.gov/cpr/infographics/ast-heat.htm
https://www.rrca.org/education/hot-weather-running-tips