



Continuing the Little League tradition of making it "safer for the kids."

## Watch Your Players

# Heat, Humidity Spell Danger

## High heat with humidity form dangerous combination

On hot summer days, protecting your players from potentially deadly injury may depend on what you *don't* do.

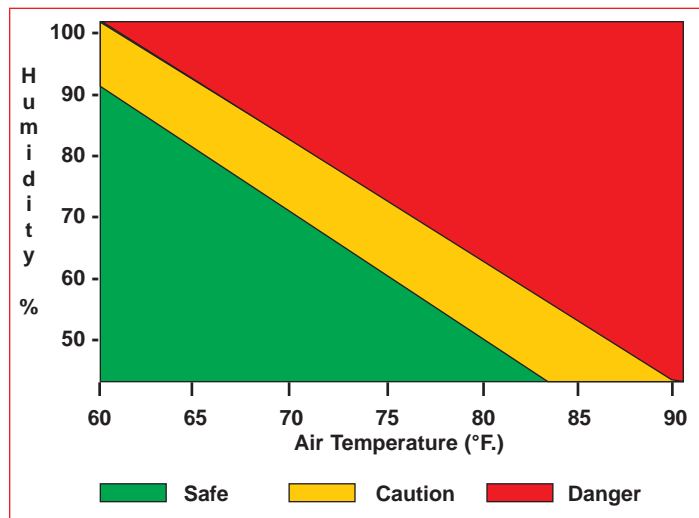
Children's heat regulating processes are not fully developed, and their skin surface is proportionately greater than that of an adult's. So exposing players to prolonged workouts or games in high heat, or mild heat with high humidity, is a risk you shouldn't take.

Because their body surface to weight ratio is high, a child's skin actually works against them, taking in more heat than they can absorb internally; so where an adult's temperature might slowly climb as they become overheated, on a hot, humid day a child's will skyrocket, leaving little time to react.

To protect players from heat illnesses — heat stress, heat exhaustion and heat stroke — make sure all your players are properly hydrated before games and practices. Make sure your coaches know to schedule drink breaks every 15 to 30 minutes during practices on hot days, and to encourage players to drink between every inning.

If you are not sure how much fluid to drink, you can monitor your hydration using one of these methods.

1. Weight: Weigh before and again after practice. For every pound players lose during the workout they will need to drink 2 cups of fluid to rehydrate their bodies. Doctors recommend players drink enough clear fluids to be back to their normal body weight before playing/practicing again in high heat.
2. Urine color: Check the color of your urine. If it's dark gold like apple juice, you're dehydrated. If you



are well hydrated, your urine will look like pale lemonade.

### When to Play

With All-Star games already upon us, make sure coaches aren't over-scheduling practices. Practices should always occur in the morning before noon or in the evening, as temps start to moderate.

On hot days, many leagues have a mandatory break every three innings for all participants — especially needed for umpires, catchers

and pitchers — to cool off and rehydrate.

### What, When to Drink

- Drink 10 to 16 ounces of cold fluid about 15 to 30 minutes before workouts.
- Drink 4 to 8 ounces of cold fluid during exercise at 10 to 15 minute intervals.
- Drink a beverage that contains a small amount of sodium and electrolytes like potassium and chloride.
- Start drinking early in your workout because you will not feel thirsty until you have already lost 2% of your body weight; by that time you will already be significantly dehydrated.
- Avoid carbonated drinks, which can cause gastrointestinal distress and may decrease the fluid volume.
- Avoid beverages with caffeine due to its diuretic effect.
- Research has found that sports drinks containing between 6% and 8% carbohydrate (sugars) are absorbed into the body as rapidly as water and can provide energy to working muscles that water cannot.

(See May, 1999 ASAP News for more info and full-size poster: "When It's Hot, Drink Before You're Thirsty.")

# Make league's barbecues safe

## Keep food safe from bacteria, check grill for problems

### Barbecue Safety

Safely transporting food, precooking and preventing cross-contamination are the major ingredients of barbecue safety.

### Chill Foods to Stop Bacteria

When transporting food, either from the grocery store or to a picnic area, keep it cool to minimize bacterial growth. Pack meat, poultry, salads and other perishables in an insulated cooler with ice.

Marinade is a savory acidic sauce in which a food is soaked to tenderize and add flavor. Always marinate meats in the refrigerator, not on the counter. Reserve a portion of the marinade that hasn't touched raw meat for a dip or basting sauce. Don't reuse marinade used on raw meat or poultry unless it has been boiled first to destroy any bacteria.

### Take Care With Meat Items

Meats and poultry may be precooked on the stove, microwave or oven to reduce grilling times. If foods are partially precooked, place immediately on the grill to finish cooking. Never partially cook meats and poultry and wait to finish cooking later. If meats and poultry are completely cooked ahead of time and chilled, they may be reheated on the grill to provide a barbecued flavor.

If take-out foods such as fried chicken or barbecued beef will be reheated on the grill, and they won't be reheated/eaten within two hours of purchase, buy them ahead of time and chill thoroughly.

### Keep Foods Separate, Clean Up Often

Don't use the same platter and utensils for raw and cooked meats and poultry. Be sure there are plenty of clean utensils and platters to allow separate handling of raw foods and cooked foods. Pack clean, soapy sponges, clothes and wet towelettes for cleaning surfaces and hands. There is an antibacterial soap on the market now that does not need water and would be ideal to carry on a picnic for cleaning platters and utensils.

### Cook Foods Thoroughly

Cook everything thoroughly. Rare or medium meat or poultry can harbor harmful bacteria. Fish should always be

"Can you give us some advice on barbecue safety? Every Saturday we have a barbecue during the ball games. Are there guidelines for sanitizing utensils between each use, maintaining food (such as hamburger beef and tomatoes) to ensure we keep PHFs out of the temperature danger zones, using and storing propane tanks, and any other barbecue safety info?"

**Douglas Polgar, safety officer  
Sierra Little League,  
Sunnyvale, Calif.**

fully cooked. For greatest safety, ground meat should reach 160° F on a meat thermometer, and poultry should reach 180° F for doneness. Since grilled food often browns very fast on the outside, make a "sample cut" to visually check for doneness. The juices should run clear and meat should not be pink, although meat color is not accurate (check Page 3).

Based on current research findings, eating moderate amounts of grilled meats, fish, and poultry, cooked thoroughly without charring, does not pose a health problem.

### Resources:

- USDA Consumer Information Publication.1996. "Barbecue Food Safety".
  - Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA Food Safety Publications.1996.  
<http://www.fsis.usda.gov/OA/pubs/barbecue.pdf>
  - USDA Meat and Poultry Hotline: 1-800-535-4555
- Material written by Mary Abgrall and Scottie Misner, May 1998. Part of Food Safety Tips, College of Agriculture, University of Arizona. Document located at <http://ag.arizona.edu/pubs/health/foodsafety/az1069.html>

### Grilling Safety

According to the Insurance Information Institute, backyard barbecues result in more than 2,000 fires and even three deaths each year. Most problems happen when you fire up a grill that hasn't been used for several months.

**Gas grill:** check it over thoroughly before using it. Check for leaks, cracking or brittleness, and clean out the tubes that lead into the burner — look for blockages from spiders or food waste.

Make sure the grill is at least 10 feet from *any* buildings or trees. And never leave the grill unattended.

**Charcoal grill:** use starter fluid sparingly and never put it on an open flame. And it's always best to have a fire extinguisher nearby... it can stop a fire before it spreads.

Also, be careful if you pick up gas canisters... never leave them in a hot car. The heat could cause some of the gas to leak out.

*(Also, see the April, 2000 ASAP News for more food tips.)*

# USDA encourages use of thermometers

WASHINGTON, D.C — The United States Department of Agriculture launched a new food safety education campaign in Spring 2000 to promote the use of food thermometers. The campaign theme is: "It's Safe to Bite When the Temperature is Right!"

"This national food safety education campaign is designed to encourage consumers to use a food thermometer when cooking meat, poultry, and egg products. Using a food thermometer is the only way to tell when food has reached a high enough temperature to destroy harmful pathogens that may be in the raw food," said Under Secretary for Food Safety Catherine Woteki.

"Color is misleading and should not be relied on to indicate a safely cooked product. Meat or poultry color can fool even the most experienced cook. USDA research shows that one out of every four hamburgers turns brown in the middle before it is safely cooked," Woteki said.

USDA introduced its new messenger, "Thermy™," to promote the use of food thermometers in the home.

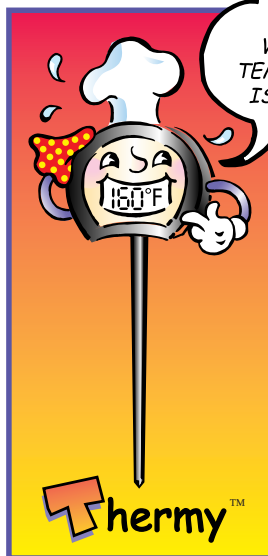
"Consumers will soon see 'Thermy™' at many retail stores and in broadcast messages as a reminder to purchase and use a food thermometer when cooking,"

Woteki said.

Tom Billy, USDA's Food Safety and Inspection Service administrator, said, "I am concerned that... only a small percent of consumers use (food thermometers) often when cooking small foods like hamburgers, pork chops, or chicken breasts."

Food thermometers help ensure food is cooked to a safe temperature, prevent overcooking, and take the guesswork out of preparing a safe meal. "Food thermometers should be used every time you prepare hamburgers, poultry, roasts, chops, egg casseroles, meat loaves, and combination dishes," says Billy.

Billy said that there are a wide variety of reliable food thermometers available in grocery and kitchen stores, and that many are inexpensive. "They are high-tech and easy to use. Their cost is minimal when considering your family's safety. This is especially true for people who are at high risk, including young children, pregnant women, people over 65, and those with chronic illnesses."



Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA



## Prepare for dangerous storms



In baseball, three strikes and you're out. With lightning, one strike is all it takes.

When considering lightning, safety officers should think in terms of preparation, rather than prevention. Lightning and dangerous storms cannot be stopped. At any given time, more than 2000 thunderstorms are in progress around the world. Strikes to earth are random, and total protection from lightning impossible. However, leagues can reduce the risk of catastrophe by educating personnel and developing an evacuation plan.

The National Lightning Safety Institute lists six steps to safety for outdoor athletic events:

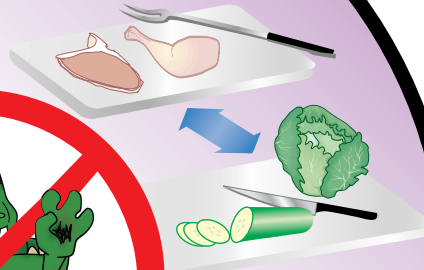
- 1. A responsible person should be designated to monitor weather conditions.** Local weather forecasts should be monitored 24 hours prior to events. A portable weather radio is recommended.
- 2. Suspension and resumption of activities should be planned in advance.** Safe evacuation sites include metal vehicles with windows up, enclosed buildings, or if necessary, low ground.
- 3. Unsafe shelter areas include all outdoor metallic objects like flag poles, fences, light poles, and metal bleachers.** Avoid trees, water, open fields, and using the telephone.
- 4. Lightning's distance from you can be referenced by noting the time from its flash to the bang of associated thunder.** For each five second count, lightning is one mile away, i.e. 10 seconds = 2 miles. Since the distance from one strike to the next can be up to 1.5 miles, the NLSI suggests you activate your lightning evacuation plan *no later* than a count of 15.
- 5. If you feel your hair standing on end or hear "crackling noises," you are in lightning's electric field.** Immediately remove metal objects and objects with metal pieces like baseball caps, place your feet together, duck your head, and crouch like a catcher with hands on knees.
- 6. People struck by lightning do not carry an electrical charge and are safe to handle.** Apply CPR immediately if qualified, and get emergency help.

# FIGHT BAC!

**CLEAN**  
Wash hands  
and surfaces  
often.



**SEPARATE**  
Don't cross-  
contaminate.



**CHILL**  
Refrigerate  
promptly.



**COOK**  
Cook to proper  
temperatures.



Keep Food Safe From Bacteria

TM



**T**hermy™ says:

"It's Safe to Bite  
When The Temperature is Right!"

Food Safety and Inspection Service, USDA



## 'Are warm-up exercises needed?'

**Q:** *"Are warm-up exercises necessary? None of the coaches practice warm-ups with their teams. Most of the youngsters do not seem to be affected by the lack of exercising. I have noticed on occasion that pitchers seem to develop sore shoulders during their time on the pitcher's mound. What specific exercises should pitchers be doing to prevent injury to their arms? What kinds of exercises should any and all of the players be doing prior to playing, during play, and after play? Are there any books available at bookstores or libraries that can be used as references for Little League teams and players for exercising and safety?"*

**John A. Cooper, safety officer  
Mission Hill Little League, Boston, Mass.**

**A:** It is recommended that all players stretch prior to playing either in practice or games. Even Major League Baseball players stretch out prior to playing. As for pitchers in particular, most will develop sore arm muscles from inadequate muscle conditioning, or arm strength. Proper pre-season work and a slowly increasing level of use in practices prior to the first game will help alleviate that. But if a player isn't in good condition to pitch early in the season, limiting the number of innings in a single game in which they pitch will help reduce the possibility of arm soreness. Make sure your players feel comfortable talking to their coaches when they are getting tired on the mound. Severe injuries can occur when a player tries to "pitch through" tiredness. *(For reference materials on stretching exercises, please see the 2000 Safety Officer Manual or the March, 2000 issue of the ASAP News for a poster on warm-up drills.)*

**Q:** *"A player broke his arm. His parents' insurance paid for everything but the deductible. Will Little League insurance cover it?"*

**Jeff Chisom, safety officer  
Central Little League**

**A:** If your league carries the Little League/CNA Insurance coverage, all available charges are eligible up to the maximum, subject to a \$50 deductible, which is the responsibility of the parent.

**Q:** *"I was on your Web site, and I'm trying to find out information about the use of safety balls, or Reduced Injury Factor balls, in the younger ages in Little League."*

**Chris Adams  
Tucson, AZ**

**A:** Different balls are available for use in the regular season or tournaments. Manufacturers are even marking RS or RT (regular season/regular tournament) on balls to make it clear for which the ball is authorized. Many leagues use non-traditional, or non-tournament balls in their minor divisions. A list of the various approved balls which meet the Little League rules is sent to your league president with league supplies.

**Check It Out!** The ASAP News is now on-line at: <http://www.littleleague.org/manuals/asap/newsletters/index.htm> We encourage you to bookmark the address and pass the URL on to other league members. Little League is considering distributing the ASAP News via the Internet, with email or postcard notices alerting readers to the next issue. Please give us your feedback.

Have a question or tip to share?  
Call the ASAP Hotline:  
**800-811-7443,**  
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P.O. Box 3485  
Williamsport, PA 17701

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Permit No. 4053

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## HOTLINE IDEAS

## FROM READERS

*"Leagues concentrate on SAFETY for the players, coaches, umpires, volunteers and fans, but some of them forget the SAFETY of their moneys collected through concession, raffles, and other donations. Three basic rules to insure protection from theft and fraud are:*

- "1. Bank deposits should be made daily.*
- "2. A written treasurer's report should be given at each meeting with discussion of any irregularities.*
- "3. A complete financial statement as required by Williamsport must be made with a copy to the league board, the DA, and Headquarters at the close of each season."*

**Mel Haas, District Administrator  
Washington District 5**

*"Advice for first aid can be obtained from any local fire department. It is also very possible that members of the local fire department would be willing to stand by at the games to provide medical coverage. Many fire-fighters are EMT's or at least First Responders. I am a volunteer firefighter as well (which is how I became involved)."*

**Alan Saball, safety officer  
Fitchburg, Mass., Eastern Little League**

**ASAP HOTLINE**  
24 HOUR TOLL-FREE  
**800-811-7443**

**The 2000 Safety Officer Manual**  
has been delivered! Didn't get it? Visit:  
[www.littleleague.org/manuals/asap](http://www.littleleague.org/manuals/asap)

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ASAP News is a service of  
Little League Baseball®, Inc.  
facilitated and published by  
Musco Lighting, Inc.  
P.O. Box 808  
Oskaloosa, Iowa 52577

© June, 2000, Little League Baseball  
and Musco Lighting  
**Hotline: 800/811-7443**  
Fax: 515/673-4852  
E-mail address: [asap@musco.com](mailto:asap@musco.com)



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