



ULTIMATE CANADA HEALTH AND SAFETY PROTOCOLS

1. Emergency Medical and Safety Plan

- Complete the Emergency Action Plan (see sample form)
- Must keep copy at designated medic area at event site and communicate information in plan to teams prior to the event

2. Medical Area Requirements

For any field site with more than 1 playing field, a set medical area must be designated for the duration of the event

3. Medical Staff Requirements

For all National level tournaments, certified Athletic Trainers or Physiotherapists are required to be on-site. Regional events, depending on the size of the event require first aid staff. In some cases, a tournament director with first aid training is sufficient depending on the number of teams and athletes present. Below is a guideline of how many therapists are ideal based on the size of the event.

Event Size (# of people including spectators)	Normal Conditions (Heat Index <32.2 C)
< 50	A
50 - 250	B
250-500	1 ATC
501-999	2ATC
1000-1999	3+ATC
>=2000	3+ATC and EMT

MC = Medical Contact must be 25 or older, must know how to get to the nearest hospital and must be able to call 911 immediately if needed.

Key:
A = MC is on-site non-participant
B = MC is on-site non-participant with basic first aid knowledge and CPR training
ATC = Certified Athletic Trainer or Physiotherapist EMT = Emergency Medical Technician or Paramedic on-site

Note: If using satellite field sites, you should meet the above requirements for each satellite field site (more than 5 minutes away). For example: If there are 500 players at one field site and 50 on another (that is more than 5 minutes away) then the first field site should meet the 250-500 event size requirements and the second field site should meet the 50-250 event size requirements.

4. Weather and Wind Policies

Wind

One of the factors that a tournament director needs to consider is wind. While the wind itself is out of the control of the tournament director, it is something that should be considered and planned for. Is your site normally windy? Are there times of year that are windier? Are there times of day that are windier? Find out. Check with the field owners or managers. Check websites. Check the internet.

So, what choices do you have regarding play?

- Some field complexes are flexible in the way the fields can be efficiently drawn. If you have a sense that wind will be a factor, you might alter your vision of your field map to best suit the expected wind conditions. Most players prefer a cross-wind game (with fields running perpendicular to the wind) to an upwind/downwind game (with fields running parallel to the wind).
- If you are using portable fields, use more garden staples (or the like) than you would under still conditions to help the fields hold their shape against the winds. Use safety cones as the cutouts provide less resistance to the wind and are less likely to blow over/away. Cones can also be secured with garden staples.
- Does your tournament format/schedule allow for flexibility for play to be paused during times of high wind? If so, consider not scheduling games during those times.

More important than play, a tournament director needs to consider the safety of those at his/her tournament. What choices can you make as a tournament director to minimize the chance of injury?

- Consider the shelters at your event. Most events have tents. If the winds are forecast to be extremely high for the weekend, you might choose to forego a tent or tents. If you do choose to have tents, there are choices and options to consider in conjunction with the tent owners and assembly crew. Larger frame tents can be secured to the ground with stakes (which can vary in length) into the ground or with large weights (sandbags, blocks, water barrels). Tents that aren't properly secured to the ground become very dangerous. Even stakes and weights that are professionally installed can become loose and extremely dangerous blowing in high winds. Additionally, ask about sidewalls and the anticipated winds. Sidewalls can offer protection from the wind, but they can also become loose and flap & flail dangerously in high winds. Some sidewalls can be removed or adjusted in windy conditions. Understand your choices and make decisions with safety in mind.
- It is likely that not every tent at your event will be professionally installed. For other tents, both those your organizing committee are utilizing and those brought by vendors, teams, or

spectators, communicate your expectations/requirements, including the field rules for tents & stakes (many fields have infrastructure below the surface that can be damaged). They should be placed safely away from play and secured against the wind, too. Many portable “pop-up” tents come with only very short stakes that shouldn’t be relied upon to secure them in high winds. Every tent should have someone responsible for it and those persons need to be prepared to take action at your instruction. In the expectation of windy conditions, be prepared to lower tent frames, take off tent tops, and/or take down tents completely.

- Consider other items or structures and how they might react to the wind. More and more tournaments have media coverage. Photographers/videographers will sometimes bring scaffolding for better vantage points. Ensure these are erected appropriately, and that areas around them are clear in case they were to fall. Signage and banners can flap and flail dangerously. Be sure that they are displayed safely and securely or not at all.
- Wind can also cause play and safety to intersect more often. There is certainly a correlation between windy conditions and aptly named “hospital” passes. Again, you can consider pausing play should conditions warrant. Sure, many players will enjoy challenging conditions, but use your judgment and consult with others to determine if the conditions become unsafe or unplayable.

Steps you should take at the outset of your event and re-check periodically during your event:

- Make sure that all tents, signage, and other objects are secured. Even if it isn’t windy during setup and/or wind conditions aren’t supposed to worsen, be prepared by having things properly secured.
- Just as for lightning and other contingencies, you should have a communication plan in place to quickly relay information. As stated above, “Every tent should have someone responsible for it and those persons need to be prepared to take action at your instruction.” You need to have a plan in place to efficiently relay those instructions to everyone at your event that would be responsible and/or can help better secure your event should wind conditions make it necessary. That can be public address, bull horn, walkie-talkies, or other means, but, remember that communication is two-way. Just because you send a message does not mean that it has been heard and understood. Get the word out and then get acknowledgements. If you don’t get acknowledgements, take further action to relay the message. If the message still isn’t received, find others that can assist with those tasks. Remember, safety first.
- Make sure teams are in the communications loop. Tell them what to expect before the event via e-mail, captains meeting, and/or event guide, but be sure to include them. Let them know that following your safety instructions (even when relayed by staff) is not an option.

Understand your options should high winds arise. You can instruct your staff/volunteers to:

- Confirm that everything is secure
- Re-secure or remove any loose sidewalls
- Lower tent frames
- Remove tent toppers
- Completely take down pop-up tents
- Suspend play
- Have everyone seek shelter

Lightning Policy

Lightning can be a significant threat to the safety of participants in outdoor athletic events like Ultimate. The odds of being struck by lightning are significantly reduced when proper safety precautions are taken. The following preventative steps should be taken by Ultimate Canada event coordinators in an effort to maintain the safety of participants and spectators.

- Establish a chain of command to determine who is watching and listening for a potential lightning threat and who will make the call to stop play and send individuals to safety. Typically the chain of command at UC events is that the Competition Director and then the Tournament Director and/or Events Manager.
- Should lightning safety decisions and procedures need to be communicated effectively to participants and spectators, a horn will be blown to stop all games and all volunteers will be radioed (when possible) to instruct players to take cover and clear all fields.
- Be aware of and be able to communicate to participants and spectators the location of the closest safe shelter. Safe shelter includes the following:
 - First choice: Any frequently used building with electrical wiring and plumbing facilities which will help to ground the structure. Shower facilities should be avoided. Showers and other plumbing facilities should not be used during a storm event.
 - Second choice: Any fully enclosed vehicle with a hard top and closed windows. It is not the rubber tires that protect the occupants from a lightning strike, but the hard metal framework which dissipates the electric charge around the vehicle. It is important to not touch the sides of the vehicle.
- Use the “When thunder roars, go indoors!” method to determine when and if you need to send people to shelter.

If you can hear thunder, you can get hit by lightning. As soon as you hear thunder, quickly get to a safe location. More people are struck before and after a thunderstorm than during one. Stay inside for 30 minutes after the last rumble of thunder.

Please note the following recommendations from Environment Canada:

- To plan for a safe day, check the weather forecast first. If thunderstorms are forecast, avoid being outdoors at that time or make an alternate plan. Identify safe places and determine how long it will take you to reach them.
- Watch the skies for developing thunderstorms and listen for thunder. As soon as you hear thunder, quickly get to a safe location. If you can hear thunder, you are in danger of being hit by lightning. More people are struck before and after a thunderstorm than during one.

- Get to a safe place. A safe location is a fully enclosed building with wiring and plumbing. Sheds, picnic shelters, tents or covered porches do NOT protect you from lightning. If no sturdy building is close by, get into a metal-roofed vehicle and close all the windows.
- Do not handle electrical equipment, telephones or plumbing. These are all electrical conductors. Using a computer or wired video game system, taking a bath or touching a metal window frame all put you at risk of being struck by lightning. Use battery-operated appliances only.
- If caught outdoors far from shelter, stay away from tall objects. This includes trees, poles, wires and fences. Take shelter in a low-lying area but be on the alert for possible flooding.

Know where the closest “safe structure or location” is to the field or playing area and know how long it takes to get to that safe structure or location. Safe structure or location is defined as:

- Any building normally occupied or frequently used by people, i.e., a building with plumbing and /or electrical wiring that acts to electrically ground the structure. Avoid using shower facilities for safe shelter and do not use the showers or plumbing facilities during a thunderstorm.

In the absence of a sturdy, frequently inhabited building, any vehicle with a hard metal roof (not a convertible or golf cart) and rolled-up windows can provide a measure of safety. A vehicle is certainly better than remaining outdoors. It is not the rubber tires that make a vehicle a safe shelter, but the hard metal roof which dissipates the lightning strike around the vehicle. Do not touch the sides of any vehicle!

If no safe structure or location is within a reasonable distance, find a thick grove of small trees surrounded by taller trees or a dry ditch. Assume a crouched position on the ground with only the balls of the feet touching the ground, wrap your arms around your knees and lower your head. Minimize contact with the ground because lightning current often enters a victim through the ground rather than by a direct overhead strike. Minimize your body’s surface area and the ground! Do not lie flat! If unable to reach safe shelter, stay away from the tallest trees or objects such as light poles or flag poles), metal objects (such as fences or bleachers), individual trees, standing pools of water, and open fields. Avoid being the highest object in a field. Do not take shelter under a single, tall tree.

Avoid using the telephone, except in emergency situations. People have been struck by lightning while using a land-line telephone. A cellular phone or a portable remote phone is a safe alternative to land-line phones, if the person and the antenna are located within a safe structure or location, and if all other precautions are followed.

When considering resumption of any athletics activity, wait at least thirty (30) minutes after the last flash of lightning or sound of thunder before returning to the field.

First aid for lightning victims

- Prompt, aggressive CPR has been highly effective for the survival of victims of lightning strikes.
- Lightning victims do not carry an electrical charge and can be safely handled.
- Call for help. Victims may be suffering from burns or shock and should receive medical attention immediately. Call 9-1-1 or your local ambulance service.
- Give first aid. If breathing has stopped, administer cardio-pulmonary resuscitation (CPR). Use an automatic external defibrillator if one is available.

For additional information the following websites are helpful:

<http://www.ec.gc.ca/foudre-lightning/default.asp?lang=En&n=57412D67-1>

www.weatheroffice.gc.ca/lightning

Extreme Heat and Cold

- When the Heat Index reaches 37.7 Celsius (100F) ([see NOAA/National Weather Service Heat Index Chart](#)), it is recommended that play be suspended until the heat index drops below 37.7 Celsius (100F). In colder temperatures and/or wetter conditions, it is important to be with event medical staff, discuss the situation with team captains, and be willing to adjust the schedule or delay/cancel games to ensure player safety.

5. Air Quality Guidelines

This document is meant to serve as a guideline for Ultimate Canada staff, Provincial and Territorial Sport Organizations, Leagues, Team Officials (coaches, managers and captains), Players, Tournament Directors, Observers, and Game Facilitators affiliated with Ultimate Canada. As a guideline, it suggests what should be considered in assessing air quality at local fields and awareness of potential health impacts.

BASIS

The best scientific information available is used for these guidelines. It will be updated as new knowledge becomes available. This guideline document includes background information about the Air Quality Health Index (AQHI), asthma management, and exercise-induced bronchoconstriction (EIB).

POLICY FOR GAMES AND TOURNAMENTS

1. Check the following website for current Air Quality
https://weather.gc.ca/mainmenu/airquality_menu_e.html
 - a. For Alberta the following website may also be used:
<http://environment.alberta.ca/apps/aqhi/aqhi.aspx> (APP also available, see resources)
 - a. For BC the following website may also be used:
<http://www.env.gov.bc.ca/epd/bcairquality/data/aqhi-table.html>
 - b. Other Air Quality measurement websites may also be used if they provide greater accuracy for a specific area or community.
2. Click on the name of the community the activity is taking place in or on the AQHI station name
3. Note the station, time, and date, and Index calculation
 - a. Updates usually occur hourly (at the top of the hour).
 - b. Use the index calculation that is within one hour of scheduled start time for a game or training session if available. If it is not available, use forecasted maximums.
 - c. If the AQHI is 3 or below, continue with activity as normal.
 - d. If the AQHI is “4-6” then go to step 4, 5, or 6 as appropriate.**
 - e. If the AQHI is “7” or higher then go to steps 7 or 8 as appropriate.**
4. AQHI 4-6: Tournament play
 - a. Due to multiple games in a tournament, when the AQHI is “4-6” the following changes should be considered to provide added resting periods:
 - i. Addition of one official break per half. For a game to 15, the first break occurs when a team reaches 4. The second break occurs when a team reaches 12 or at soft cap. These numbers should be prorated for games played to a different point total. For the additional breaks, the time between pulls is extended by 3 minutes (**i.e. 3 minutes + regular time between points, which is a maximum of 4 minutes and 25 seconds between pulls under the USAU 2020-2021 rules**).
5. AQHI 4-6: Games
 - a. A league game should continue as scheduled.
6. AQHI 4-6: Practices and training
 - i. Be prepared to adjust the practice by:
 - Reducing the intensity.
 - Reducing the duration of the practice.
 - Providing resting periods.
7. AQHI 7 or higher: Games and tournaments
 - a. If the game organizer has not cancelled games in advance all teams, observers and game facilitators should arrive ready to play.
 - b. If the AQHI is still above “7” at the next calculation the teams involved and the observers or game facilitators (if applicable) should consider delaying kick-off or cancelling the game.
 - i. When present observers and game facilitators reserve the final right to cancel the game if the conditions are considered dangerous, in their opinion.
 - ii. If the game is cancelled, teams are to report to game organizers that the reason for cancellation with the Index calculation, time & date, number calculated and AQHI station used.

- c. If air quality changes dramatically during a game (e.g. sudden smoke event caused by wind direction change) coaches, captains, observers and game facilitators are advised to use their discretion. Record all decisions and relevant information when submitting game information.
- 8. AQHI 7 or higher: Practices and training
 - a. Team officials should consider a rescheduled practice or postponing practice until a later time.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

1. Be aware of weather and other conditions:
 - a. Current forest fires and their locations in the province.
 - b. Local burning of stubble on fields or agricultural fields – these can increase particulate matter in the air without impacting the AQHI for a city.
 - c. Sudden and dramatic changes in wind strength and direction.
 - d. Proximity of any major road or highway.
 - e. Near or downwind of any industrial areas or other significant emission sources.
2. Some provincial and territorial health services maintain an Air Quality Advisory website that can be used.
3. The AQHI is a web-based, risk management tool which describes a local reading of air quality as it relates to human health. While the Index number for a location can rise into the triple digits (Fort McMurray in 2016 peaked at over “180”) anything over “7” is of primary concern.
4. Health Canada recommends that for strenuous activities, like Ultimate, one should reschedule events if the AQHI is 7 or above.
5. The AQHI treats anything above 10+ as “Very High” with health messages for the “general” and “at risk” populations to reschedule all outdoor activities – strenuous or not.
6. Elite athletes are in the “at-risk population because of the intensity and duration of exposure to outdoor air quality.” Young children and seniors are more sensitive to air pollution. Additionally, women appear to be more affected than men due to smaller airways, lungs, and respiratory systems.
7. Regarding air quality, Ultimate is considered a high exposure sport.
8. Individuals tend to rely on sensory perception to evaluate air quality when, in fact, the pollutants that present the greatest harm to human health are difficult to see or smell (e.g. ground level ozone).
9. It is neither possible nor desirable to acclimatize athletes to air pollution. The US Olympic Committee recommends that when competing in high pollution areas the best strategy for training is alternative sites. “Stay away from air pollution.”
10. Exercise-Induced Bronchospasm (EIB) is a sudden narrowing of the airways in response to vigorous exercise. It may occur in some individuals who have no pre-existing diagnosis of asthma. Most obvious symptoms of EIB include wheezing, prolonged shortness of breath, tightness in chest, coughing, extreme fatigue, and chest pain.
11. Asthma sufferers should have it under control before exercise (no coughing, shortness of breath, wheezing, etc.) and no other respiratory concerns (common cold, etc.). According to studies, asthma is now twice as prevalent in elite athletes as the general population. Symptoms of severe asthma emergency include: struggling to breathe, rescue inhaler does not help, cannot

speaking/finishing sentences, nostrils flaring out, fainting, severe fatigue, blue lips and nails, and unconsciousness.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Ultimate Canada would like to thank and acknowledge Richard Dixon and the Alberta Soccer Association (ASA) who have done extensive work in researching air quality best practices with Environment Canada, Alberta Health, and Health Canada. This policy was developed based on their work.

REFERENCE AND LINKS

Alberta Soccer Association Air Aware Guidelines - <https://albertasoccer.com/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Alberta-Soccer-Air-Quality-Monitoring-Guidelines-November-2016.pdf>

Air quality APP - <https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/alberta-air-qualityhealth/id734013589?mt=8>

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6. Sideline Safety

- Players and spectators should make every effort to keep objects, including but not limited to bags, strollers, chairs, coolers and tents, as far away from the playing field as possible. Spectators and equipment are required to stay at least 3 yards (5 yards is recommended) from the field. If there are restraining lines or ropes, spectators and all equipment should remain behind them.
- If a player feels that an object on the sideline is not safe, s/he should inform Event Staff and should refrain from playing until s/he is satisfied that safe conditions have been established.

- Event Staff reserve the right to move or remove objects or spectators from on or near the playing field if those conditions are, in the opinion of the Event Staff, unsafe for players, staff, or spectators.

7. General Liability Insurance

- Ultimate Canada sanctioned, sponsored and series events can receive full coverage under our general liability insurance. Ultimate Canada insurance covers Ultimate and Ultimate-related activities only. Questions about what is covered should be directed to the Ultimate Canada Executive Director or Event Manager (not TDs or event medical staff).

8. Concussion Safety & Awareness

- *Education*
 - Ultimate Canada recommends the CAC "Making Head Way" course; a free one-hour online training:
 - Ensuring that this policy is covered at all Captains meetings before tournaments begin is required at all Ultimate Canada events.
- *Junior Coaching Requirements*
 - Coaches at Ultimate Canada's Canadian Ultimate Championships are required to have completed the CAC "Making Head Way" training.
- *Removal & Return to Play*
 - Captains, coaches, observers and volunteers should refer players to on-site medical staff if they suspect a player has incurred an injury during play.
 - In the event that medical staff suspect a concussion, the following steps will be followed:
 1. Remove athlete from play for a minimum of 48 hours.
 2. Ensure athlete is evaluated by a health care professional trained in concussion diagnosis and management.
 3. If a minor, inform athlete's parents or guardians about the known or possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussion: Concussion Guidelines for Parents/Caregivers.
 4. Allow athlete to return to play only with written permission from an appropriate health care professional after the minimum 48 hour waiting period.

- For events that have on-site physiotherapists or athletic therapists, all suspected concussions should have a SCAT3 (concussion awareness tool) complete. A copy should be kept with the therapists and another with the athlete or coach.
- For events that have on-site physiotherapists or athletic therapists, tournament directors should ensure that copies of the SCAT3 and Concussion Guidelines for Parents/Caregivers are available for physiotherapists and athletic Therapists to use.
- Players who have been removed from play may not take the field until properly cleared by the on-site medical team. Failure to abide by this will follow the same consequences as playing with an illegal roster. (For CUC See rule 2.3.4.2 and 2.3.4.3 in the tournament manual)
- Any player removed from play must have the “Removal from Play” form filled out and signed by one of their registered coaches who has taken the “Making Headways” on-line course.

9. Hospitalization Policy

- If, during an Ultimate Canada event, an athlete receives care at a hospital, medical clinic, or doctor’s office, or is referred to a hospital/doctor by event medical staff, the athlete is barred from further competition in that event until s/he provides a doctor’s note, on letterhead or prescription pad, to event medical staff stating that the athlete is authorized to return to competition.

Last updated : May 2020