



## Preseason Checklist for Safety: Athletes & Parents

- **Have a Preseason Sports Physical**
  - Make sure you're healthy enough for physical activity!
  - Many schools require an annual physical...is yours up to date?
  - Schedule with your Family Physician or visit an urgent care facility for a sports physical
  - Did you know that Safe Sports Network offers FREE sports physicals twice a year? Visit [http://www.nhmi.net/free\\_physicals.php](http://www.nhmi.net/free_physicals.php) for more information.
- **Make Sure You're "In Shape"**
  - Trying to jump right into sports without proper training is a recipe for injury.
  - Your coaches may have offseason programs to follow or you can **contact us** for advice at 603-627-9728 or amy@nhmi.net.
  - Sports are a huge commitment. Being able to do sports means having to deal with school, family, friends and other activities as well. Make sure you're mentally prepared to handle the workload.
- **Provide Pertinent Medical History**
  - If you have medical conditions and/or special needs, be sure to follow up with all important people at your school (Coaches, Athletic Trainers, etc). Make sure they are prepared to handle any emergencies that may arise.
- **Fuel Yourself - Proper Nutrition Can Make All the Difference**
  - To play at your best, you need to give your body the best fuel. Eat whole grains, lean meats, fresh fruits and vegetables. Limit processed foods and simple sugars.
  - Be sure to eat enough! You can't get far driving your car if your gas gauge is on Empty. Same is true for you! An apple a day can't be the whole diet!
  - Opt for food instead of pills and powders! Eat a healthy, balanced diet and you shouldn't need dietary supplements.
  - Find more information at
    - [www.usada.org/resources/nutrition](http://www.usada.org/resources/nutrition)
    - <http://www.usada.org/resources/nutrition/vitamins-minerals-and-other-supplements>
    - <http://www.usada.org/substances/supplement-411>



- **Are You Hydrated?**
  - You cannot make up for days, weeks or even months of dehydration the morning before your first practice. Develop and maintain good hydration habits!
  - 2-3 hours before exercise, drink 17-20 ounces of water.
  - Every 10-20 minutes during exercise, drink 7-10 ounces.
    - <http://www.usada.org/resources/nutrition/fluids-and-hydration>
  - Plain water is fine. If you want a Sports Drink, make sure it's a Sports Drink *NOT* an Energy Drink. Energy drinks can pose serious health risks for some young athletes.
- **Make sure you are getting enough sleep!**
  - Average adolescents need 10-12 hours of sleep a night
    - <http://sleepfoundation.org/sleep-tools-tips/healthy-sleep-tips>
- **Know What You Need to Know about Concussions**
  - There are no brain transplants yet. Although you might want to hide your concussion, playing through this injury is very likely to have bad results... Maybe seriously bad! Take care of your brain.
  - Most common symptoms are headache, dizziness, confusion.
  - What are the Red Flags? Don't ignore these things! Seek care emergently if you have:
    - Symptoms rapidly worsening, eyes unresponsive or unequal to each other, loss of consciousness
  - Visit [http://www.nhmi.net/concussion\\_management.php](http://www.nhmi.net/concussion_management.php) for more information about concussions
- **Be Sure You're Safe from Contagious Skin Conditions**
  - Bring and wear your own equipment.
  - Don't share equipment with others, even if you trust them.
  - Shower immediately after all practices and games.
  - Wash and hang dry equipment in between uses.
  - Get more info at [www.nhata.org/sites/default/files/skin-disease-fact-sheet.pdf](http://www.nhata.org/sites/default/files/skin-disease-fact-sheet.pdf)
- **Play Safe in the Heat**
  - Be Smart! Get outside and get used to the weather 2 weeks before your season.
  - Make sure you stay hydrated. Get into habit of stepping on a scale before and after practices to measure fluid weight loss. That way you figure out how much fluid you need to replace. Get back to normal weight (by replacing fluids) before the next practice session. If you aren't back to normal, tell your athletic trainer before practice begins!!
  - Know the warning signs of heat illnesses.
  - Heat Exhaustion symptoms
    - Dizzy
    - Headaches
    - Nausea



- Heat Stroke (*Potentially Fatal*)
  - Mental Confusion
  - Body temperature above 104
    - <http://ksi.uconn.edu/emergency-conditions/exertion-heat-illnesses/exertional-heat-stroke>
- See if your Coaches are aware of the guidelines for safe play in the heat
  - <https://katieept.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/heat-index-chart.jpg>
- **Know if your Coaches Know how to Keep you Safe**
  - Look for CPR, AED, First-Aid, Concussion training
  - Trained in proper equipment fitting
  - We can train your coaches. Contact amy@nhmi.net.
- **Make sure you have the appropriate equipment for your sport**
  - Make sure you have proper fitting clothing, footwear, and mouth guards.
  - Safe Sports athletic trainers can advise and instruct. Contact amy@nhmi.net.