

# Staying Safer in Unsafe Weather

## What you'll learn:

How to be prepared and stay safe in heat, sun, and lightning.



Wherever you live, your local Little League® program and its volunteers, players, and parents need to know that a little preparation can make a big difference when there is potentially dangerous weather.

Current weather-tracking technology is better than it's ever been, which means it's becoming easier to identify potentially inclement conditions. Checking the weather before a game or practice is an easy task. Coaches and umpires should be quick to postpone a practice or game if the weather conditions become dangerous.

# What to do for different weather patterns

So volunteers have checked the weather, and it looks agreeable for play. But what if an issue arises while players are on the field? Below are just a few key concerns and actions that should be taken for different types of dangerous weather.

## Heat and Humidity:

Whether your region experiences dry heat or high levels of humidity, when the temperature rises, caution must be exercised. If a player is thirsty, it's already a sign that they are becoming dehydrated. Encourage players to drink at least eight (8) ounces of water or Gatorade drink at least every 15 minutes, and find ways to give players a break in the shade. Heat-related injuries are some of the easiest weather issues to prevent.

## The Sun:

Sunlight can have damaging effects on the skin. Not only is a sunburn painful, but each instance of such an injury can increase someone's chances of developing skin cancer. The Sun Protection Factor (SPF) of a sunscreen indicates how many times longer it takes for the user to develop skin damage from the sun. Be sure parents are properly protecting their kids by ensuring they apply sunscreen while dressing for a game or practice, even under their uniforms. Sunscreen should be reapplied frequently, at least on the arms and face, as sweating can wash it away.

## Thunder and Lightning:

The old adage "If you hear it, clear it; if you see it, flee it" is an important one. Baseball and softball fields are big, open spaces, which are susceptible to potential lightning strikes. A strike can hit from up to 10 miles away, which means it could happen before you even see dark clouds in the sky. The only way to be as prepared as possible for a thunderstorm is to monitor the weather. If a storm should strike, have everyone head to an enclosed space. Cars are also safe. Shelter houses without walls and dugouts are NOT safe places. Be sure to wait at least 30 minutes after the storm to begin resuming activities, being sure to monitor the weather anyway you can.

## High Winds and Flooding:

Certain areas may also be at risk for high winds and tornados. These same areas may also be at risk for flooding. Like with lightening, be sure to identify safe zones where players, parents, and volunteers can take cover from such conditions. This is especially important if your field is

surrounded by flat area (winds and tornados) or sunk into the ground (flooding). Always check conditions beforehand.

Be sure everyone in your league is familiar with possible weather concerns in your area, and that your league has a plan in place for when these weather issues arise.