

Northam Swimming Club

Sun Protection Policy



The following policy is in place to help Northam Swimming Club minimise the risks of overexposure to UV.

Rationale

A balance of ultraviolet radiation (UV) exposure is important for health. Too much UV from the sun can cause sunburn, skin damage, eye damage and skin cancer.

Australia has one of the highest rates of skin cancer in the world. Two in three Australians will develop some form of skin cancer before the age of 70. People often experience sunburn and skin damage when playing or watching sport due to extended periods exposed to high levels of UV without appropriate sun protection.

Using the UV Index

The UV Index is a number that describes the strength of UV radiation. The higher the number, the faster unprotected skin is damaged. Safe UV levels for unprotected skin are below 3. For UV Index above 3 sun protection is vital. A UV index of 12 is four times the safe limit.

Sun protection times

- A combination of sun protection measures are needed during the daily local sun protection times (issued whenever UV levels reach 3 and above).
- To assist with the implementation of this policy, club officials, coaches and participants are encouraged to access the daily local sun protection times at myuv.com.au, on the free [SunSmart app](#) or [SunSmart widget](#).

Schedules, fixtures and modifications

- Where possible, training, events and competitions are scheduled to minimise exposure to UV above 3.
- Modification of training, events or competition occurs when high risk conditions are forecast.
- Where it is not possible to avoid peak UV periods, the following interim steps are taken to minimise the risk of overexposure to UV:
 - Warm-up activities are limited in duration and intensity.
 - The duration of the activity is reduced.
 - Activities start earlier in the morning or later in the evening.
 - Rest breaks and opportunities to seek shade and rehydrate are increased.
 - Officials rotate out of the sun more frequently than usual.
 - Officials, coaches and senior members act as role models by wearing sun-protective clothing and hats, applying sunscreen and seeking shade wherever possible.

Sun protection measures

1. Clothing

- Sun-protective clothing is promoted as part of club uniform for participants, officials and volunteers.
- Shirts are made from UPF (UV protection factor) 50+ material and have long sleeves and a collar.
- Shirts are loose-fitting and lightweight.
- Where the competition uniform does not provide adequate sun protection, participants are reminded to apply SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen to all exposed skin and wear covering clothing whilst not participating.



2. Sunscreen

- SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is promoted and/or provided to participants.
- Participants are encouraged to apply sunscreen 20 minutes before training or playing and to reapply every two hours and more often after excessive sweating or toweling dry.
- Sunscreen is stored below 30°C and replaced once it is past the use-by date.
- Participants are encouraged to apply a generous amount of sunscreen (the equivalent of one teaspoon per limb).
- A free supply of SPF30 (or higher) broad-spectrum, water-resistant sunscreen is available to all participants at any time at the club.

3. Hats

- Wide-brimmed or bucket hats are promoted as part of the club uniform. Caps and visors do not provide adequate sun protection to the face, ears and neck, and are discouraged.

4. Shade

- When not actively participating or between individual events, participants are able to rest in shaded areas.
- Where there is insufficient natural or built shade, temporary shade structures are provided or participants are notified to bring their own temporary shade (e.g. tents or umbrellas).
- Shade from buildings, trees and other structures is used where possible.
- Presentation ceremony areas etc. are protected by shade. Presentations will take place as promptly as possible after the event allowing people to move to shaded areas.
- Participants and officials rotate to cooler, shaded areas.

5. Sunglasses

- Participants are advised to wear sunglasses where possible.

Education and information

The times when sun protection is required (as determined by SunSmart's daily local sun protection times) are communicated to participants and spectators.

Vitamin D

Too little UV from the sun can lead to low vitamin D levels. Vitamin D is essential for the development and maintenance of healthy bones and muscles. Sensible sun protection does not put you at risk of low vitamin D.

Review

- This SunSmart policy will be reviewed bi-annually to ensure that the document remains current and practical.
- This policy was last updated on 3 February 2020.

Relevant documents and links

- **SunSmart Times:** myuv.com.au
- **SunSmart sun protection times widget:** sunsmart.com.au/uv-sun-protection/uv/uv-widget
- **SunSmart apps:** sunsmart.com.au/app
- **Heat and UV Guide:** sunsmart.com.au/downloads/communities/sports-clubs/uv-exposure-heat-illness-guide.pdf
- **Shade audit:** sunsmart.com.au/shade-audit/

