

Cold Exposure Policy

In cold weather temperatures proper layered clothing should be worn and encouraged by Lehigh University Athletics department staff and coaches. These include:

- Several layers around the core of the body, especially for those individuals that are not very active.
- Long pants designed to insulate. Cotton sweatpants (brownies) are excellent. On very cold days a nylon shell or wind pant can be worn on top of them for additional wind break.
- Long sleeve shirt/sweatshirt/coat designed to insulate and break the wind.
- Gloves
- Ear protection/Hat or helmet.
- Face protection.
- Wicking socks that do not hold moisture inside. Wool is excellent. Cotton absorbs and holds in moisture.

Clothing should be **layered** to allow adjustments as activity level may increase and decrease within a practice which may elevate or drop body temperature. The first layer of clothing should wick sweat and moisture away from the body. Equipment managers can identify what clothing works best for this. You may have already been issued an excellent product that will act as a wick. The top layers should act as insulators to trap heat and block wind.

The following temperature guidelines have been established for intercollegiate teams during cold weather. Cold weather is defined as any temperature that can negatively affect the body's regulatory system. These do not have to be freezing temperatures! The following guidelines have been established for Lehigh University Athletics practice and event participation.

Outside participation limited to 45 minutes:

When temperature or wind chill (which is lower than actual temperature) reaches **25° F**. Frostbite can occur in 30 minutes or less!

Termination of outside participation:

When temperature or wind chill (which is lower than actual temperature) reaches **15° F**.

In addition to the above guidelines it is recommended that additional directives are given to student athletes.

- Cold exposure/activity requires more energy from a body. Additional calorie intake may be required.
- Cold exposure/activity requires similar hydration to room temperature; however, the thirst reflex is not activated. Conscious efforts before and after practice to hydrate should be initiated.
- Never train alone. A simple ankle sprain in cold weather may become life threatening!

Signs of Cold Stress:

Student athletes should be instructed on signs of cold stress (wind chill, frostbite and hypothermia). Fatigue, confusion, slurred speech, red or painful extremities, swollen extremities, blurred vision, red watery eyes, dizziness, headache, numbness, tingling of skin and extremities, shivering, uncontrollable shivering etc. are a few warning signs of cold stress.

Cold Exposure Policy - Home Events

- LU Sports Medicine will check weather at least 3 days prior to game. In the event of anticipated inclement weather, LU Sports Medicine will contact visiting athletic trainer to discuss LU Cold Exposure Policy, and discuss plan of action should the weather be a concern on the day of competition.

- After initial contact is made with visiting athletic trainer, LU Sports Medicine will check the weather each day leading up to the game to monitor changes. Communication will be maintained with the visiting athletic trainer should any changes occur following initial discussion.
- Temperature/wind chill reaching 25-15 degrees will result in modified participation. If this occurs, a decision will be made to implement an abbreviated version of team introductions and incorporate an extended half-time.
- Temperature/wind chill reaching 15 degrees and below will result in termination of outside participation.
- Individuals/groups involved with making the decision to modify participation will be:
 - LU athletic trainer
 - Visiting athletic trainer
 - Host facilities staff
 - Officials
 - Home/Visiting Coaching Staff

Cold Exposure Policy - Away Events

- LU Sports Medicine will check weather at least 3 days prior to game. In the event of anticipated inclement weather, LU Sports Medicine will contact athletic trainer at host institution to discuss LU Cold Exposure Policy, and discuss plan of action should the weather be a concern on the day of competition.
- After initial contact is made with athletic trainer at the host institution, LU Sports Medicine will check the weather each day leading up to the game to monitor changes. Communication will be maintained with the host athletic trainer should any changes occur following initial discussion.
- Temperature/wind chill reaching 25-15 degrees will result in modified participation. If this occurs, a decision will be made to implement an abbreviated version of team introductions and incorporate an extended half-time.
- Temperature/wind chill reaching 15 degrees and below will result in termination of outside participation.
- Individuals/groups involved with making the decision to modify participation will be:
 - Host athletic trainer
 - LU athletic trainer
 - Host facilities staff
 - Officials
 - Home/Visiting Coaching Staff