

Sport Ireland is reminding people that it is important to take precautions when exercising in hot weather as it puts extra stress on your body. Here are some key tips to follow:

Acclimatisation

In the Sport Ireland Institute we use an [environmental chamber](#) to simulate high temperatures to help our athletes prepare for competition in any part of the world, so we know how important it is to acclimatise to hot conditions.

If you are new to exercising in the heat, gradually increase your intensity and duration to allow your body to adjust. Start off a bit slower than you might usually and assess the situation after around 15 minutes.

If you're feeling good then you can pick it up, but make sure to check in with yourself regularly. Limit your total exercise time to 30 minutes initially, you can increase this as you adjust to the heat.

Hydrate

Exercising in hotter weather puts an extra demand on your body. Remember to drink fluids before, during and after exercise. Water is a good start but look to add diluted squash, juice or electrolytes when exercising in the heat, to ensure you stay hydrated and are replenishing fluids and salts lost through sweating.

Bring a bottle of fluids with you, or plan water stops along your route. If doing long-duration exercise, weighing yourself before and after can be a good way to monitor your fluid loss. For every 1kg decrease in weight, aim to drink 1.5L of fluids.

Cooling

After exercising in heat, your body temperature will be higher than normal and will remain elevated for a period. Effective strategies for cooling yourself include cold water shower, sipping on colder fluids, ice drinks such as slushies or jumping in an ice bath. This will help your recovery and reduce stress on your body quicker.

Skin in the game

It is important to protect your skin from the sun. You are more at risk of skin cancer if you spend a lot of time outdoors and that includes exercising or playing sports outdoors.

In Ireland, the sun can damage your skin, even on cloudy days. Skin damage does not only happen in hot, sunny places.

Ultraviolet (UV) radiation from the sun can damage skin and increase your risk of skin cancers. This is because most skin cancers are caused by UV light damaging the DNA in skin cells. UVA and UVB are types of UV light. They damage skin over time, making it more likely for skin cancers to develop.

The UV index tells you how strong the sun's UV rays are each day. You need to protect your skin when the UV index is 3 or above. In Ireland, the UV index is usually 3 or above from April to September, even when it is cloudy. UV is usually strongest between 11am and 3pm. Check the [UV index](#) on Met Éireann

SunSmart 5s

The Healthy Services Executive and Healthy Ireland recommend that you follow the SunSmart 5s rule.

The five parts are slip, slop, slap, seek and slide.

Slip

Slip on clothes that cover your skin, such as long sleeves and T-shirts with a collar. Sun-protective clothing for babies and children

Slop

Slop on broad-spectrum water-resistant sunscreen. Broad spectrum means the sunscreen protects against UVA and UVB rays. Put sunscreen on any skin that you do not cover with clothes. When buying sunscreen, the label should have a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30 for adults and 50 for children.

You should apply sunscreen 20 minutes before going outdoors and every two hours after. However, if you have been swimming and towel drying or after sweating you will need to put it on more often than every two hours.

Slap

Slap on a wide-brimmed hat to protect your face, ears and neck. If you find yourself hiking on one of the over 900 trails listed on the [National Trails Register](#), this is especially important.

Seek

From April to September the sun is strongest between 11am and 3pm so it is a good idea to exercise outside these times if possible. If you are outside during this time, seek shade. If exercising outdoors, choose routes with shade or consider exercising in parks with trees.

Slide

Slide on wraparound sunglasses with UV protection to protect your eyes.