

Stay Safe when playing Beach Volleyball

5 Tips for JVA beach volleyballers



Few things scream “summer” more than the start of the beach volleyball season. It is a time for soaking up some rays with the scent of salt water in the air and sand between your toes. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, Americans take about two billion trips to the beach each year.

A competitive beach volleyball weekend can turn sour with just one hot sand induced blister or one piece of ocean debris. While most bad beach volleyball days end with little more than a sunburn in need of a good soak in aloe vera gel, serious injuries are more common than we’d like to believe. Here are a few tips to help you keep your beach volleyball events as safe as can be.



Before hitting the beaches, there are a few things to keep in mind. Even if you're heading to a grass court event or lake event instead of ocean beach event, listen up — many of the tips below apply to hanging out on any outdoor volleyball court during the summer. No matter where you're headed, we've rounded up 5 tips to help you keep safe at your summer tournament.

Your Action Plan

1. Save your skin

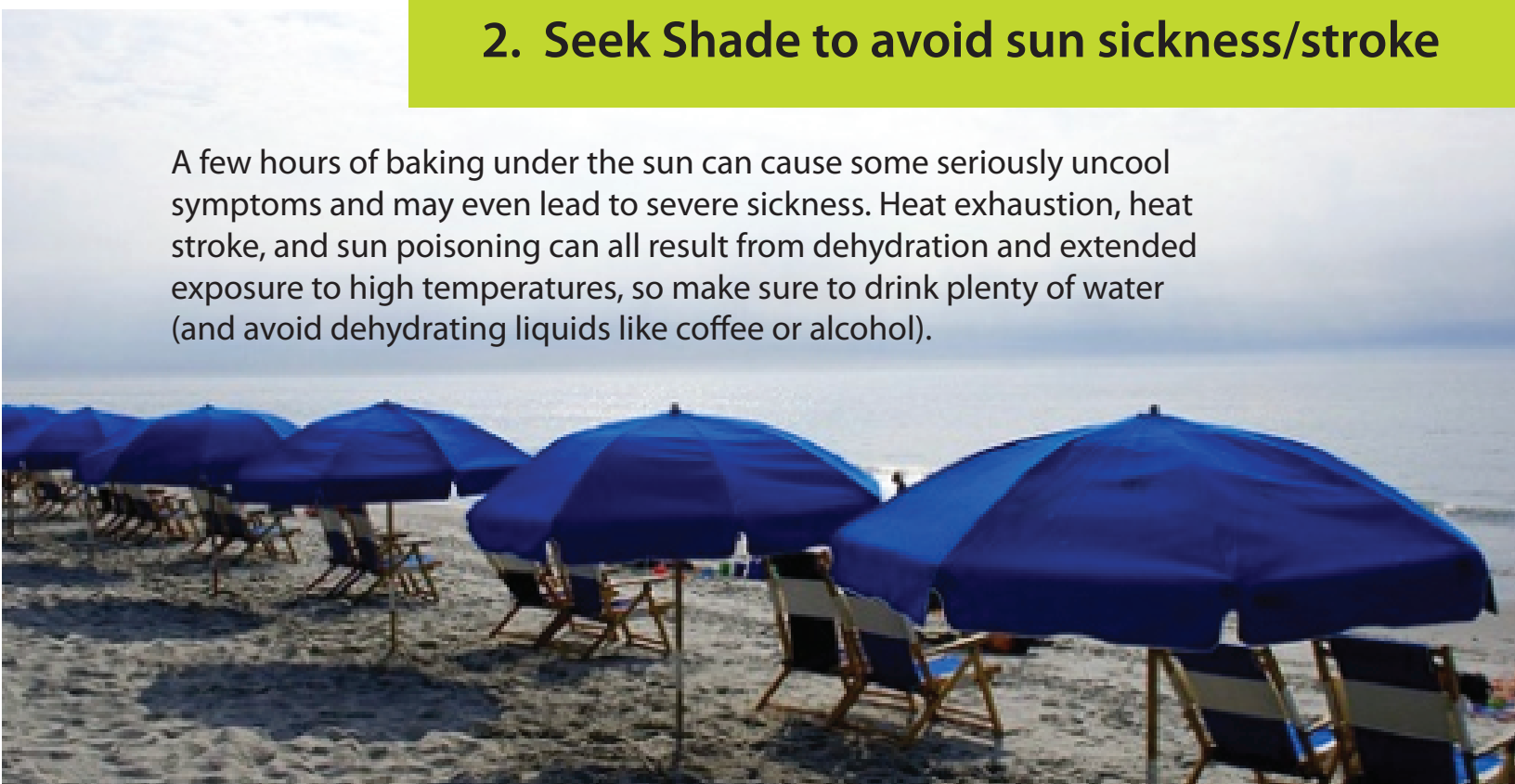


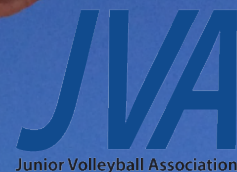
Just one blistering sunburn in childhood or adolescence more than doubles a person's chance for developing melanoma later in life. Racking up more than five sunburns at any age also doubles the risk for melanoma. Keep the red at bay by slathering on a broad-spectrum sunscreen of SPF 15 or higher, we recommend Everstride's Sunscreen Lotion SPF 30 w/Active 5 for all over body protection and Everstride's Sunscreen Stick SPF 50 for sensitive areas, including the forehead, nose and cheeks. Make sure you have a source of shade — think hats, umbrellas, tents; readily available (especially during the sun's peak hours of 10am to 4pm). Remember — eyes can get sunburned, too, so don't forget some shades for your lids.



2. Seek Shade to avoid sun sickness/stroke

A few hours of baking under the sun can cause some seriously uncool symptoms and may even lead to severe sickness. Heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and sun poisoning can all result from dehydration and extended exposure to high temperatures, so make sure to drink plenty of water (and avoid dehydrating liquids like coffee or alcohol).





Symptoms of heat exhaustion, heat stroke, and sun poisoning include confusion and dizziness, fatigue, headache, muscle cramps or weakness, nausea, excessive sweating or lack of sweating, pale skin, swelling (particularly of the hands or face), rapid heartbeat, and confusion. Sun poisoning can also be indicated by skin redness and blistering, pain and tingling, or fever and chills.



If you (or someone you're with) display any of these symptoms, get out of the sun and heat (umbrellas are your friend), remove any unnecessary clothing, drink plenty of water, and take a cool bath or shower. If symptoms are on the severe side — swelling, confusion, painful and blistering sunburns — it's best to seek medical attention.



3. Wear shoes to avoid blistering hot sand.

We know — feeling the sand between your toes is part of the quintessential beach volleyball experience. But when it's upwards of 100 degrees outside, the squishy sand doesn't feel so great (and can even cause burns!). Be sure to bring a pair of beach shoes or socks with you in case the sand gets unbearably hot (They'll help with those oh-so-necessary trips to the beach hut bathrooms, too). The best we have found for sport performance are the Sockwa G Hi range. Their TPU (recycle plastic) sole not only protects you from hot (and cold) sand but also allows for better traction when moving around the court. Sockwa also offer a similarly designed beach sock which they call Playa Hi. The Velcro fastening system is the best on the market for keeping sand out of your beach footwear and the high quality stitching makes them more durable than other similar products on the market.

4. Avoid Skin Chafing



As a beach volleyballer, you have probably experienced skinchafing, the annoying and often painful result of skin rubbing against skin or clothing. Add the element of sand and sweat and the results can be very painful. Chafing can occur anywhere on your body, but the thighs, groin, underarms, and nipples are particularly vulnerable.

There are a number of ways to prevent skin chafing, so don't let it slow you down.

Ways to Prevent Skin Chafing

1. Decrease the amount of friction to your skin.
2. Stay dry. Wet skin can make chafing worse. Before you head out the door, apply talcum and alum powders to areas that get the most sweaty. Powders can help wick moisture away from the skin. Don't stay in wet or sweaty clothes.
3. Lubricate. Apply either Fix Feet First's Goo or Everstride's Anti-Chafing Sport Stick to hot spots. These two specifically designed lubricants can help reduce friction to the skin.



Dress right. When exercising, wear proper-fitting, moisture-wicking clothes, such as those made with synthetic fibers. Do not exercise in cotton. Compression shorts, such as those worn by cyclists, may help reduce thigh chafing. Also, less is more when it comes to dressing for exercise. If it is warm outside, consider running without a shirt if you are a man and in only a jogging bra if you are a woman. Lastly, choose exercise clothes and bras that have smooth seams to avoid rubbing.