

IMPORTANT INFORMATION REGARDING WEIGHT LOSS

The health hazards associated with excessive weight reduction through food deprivation and/or dehydration are well documented. These hazards include, but are not limited to, reduced regulation of body temperature, kidney failure, and acute and/or chronic fatigue. We urge you to consider the information provided below and discuss it with your wrestler in deciding at which weight they will compete.

Beginning with the 1991-92 wrestling season, the WIAA Board of Control adopted a mandatory weight control program for Wisconsin high school wrestlers. The program has two basic components: 1) a nutrition-education dimension and 2) the establishment of a healthy minimum weight for each wrestler. Skinfold measurements are used to predict (on a scientific basis) the lowest healthy weight for every wrestler. The program requires each male wrestler to maintain at least 7% body fat and females 12% body fat. The rule does not suggest or urge wrestlers to reduce to 7%, or 12% body fat, but sets a healthy limit as to how much they can safely reduce. The rule controls: 1) the rate of weight loss and 2) the amount of weight that can be lost.

It is recognized that the skinfold measurement method of estimating body fat has some inherent error. Every effort has been made to minimize this error by utilizing WIAA certified and registered skinfold measurers. The prediction of body fat and minimum weight is not an exact science, but skinfold measurement is the best available method. With that in mind, you need to consider the following facts: 1) If body weight was manipulated through dehydration prior to skinfold measurements being taken, the predicted minimum weight may be low. This would force the wrestler to repeat the rapid weight loss practices each time they must make weight. This practice would be dangerous to the health of your growing adolescent and is one of the main reasons the WIAA 7% rule was initiated. 2) The skinfolds may have overestimated, or underestimated, the body fat of your athlete. If the original skinfold prediction overestimated percent body fat for a wrestler, the margin of safety built into the program may be slightly reduced. Once again, this is a reason to encourage wrestlers to wrestle at a normal comfortable weight not one they must struggle to maintain.

We encourage you to monitor your wrestler's diet as well as weight loss efforts. Our publication, "The Wrestler's Diet" will help you in monitoring weight loss. If you do not already have a copy of this publication, contact your school's athletic director.

Signature (Parent or Guardian)