

VHSL Wrestling Weight Control Program

Parent Information

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

1. Improve the safety of wrestling by attempting to control the amount of weight loss over time, to limit weight cycling, and eliminate potentially dangerous methods of weight loss.
2. Improve the enjoyment of wrestling by minimizing the time, effort, and discomfort associated with making weight, including excessive weight loss.
3. Educate coaches, wrestlers, and parents on healthier methods of weight loss and the potential for enhanced performance, endurance, and strength if the athlete wrestles at a more "ideal body weight".
4. Educate coaches, wrestlers, and parents on basics of good nutrition for active sports participation in growing youngsters.
5. Maximize the chance for fair and equal participation of all wrestlers by standardizing methods for weight determination and by minimizing the opportunity for perceived or real inequality among participants. Keeping the mats level for all wrestlers is critical as competitive equity based on weight has long been one of the foundations of the sport of wrestling.
6. Create a more positive public image for the sport of wrestling by attempting to eliminate one of the major criticisms leveled against the sport, (i. e. unhealthy weight loss).
7. Accomplish these goals without detracting from the discipline, mental and physical toughness, and conditioning that are very positive aspects of the sport.

OVERVIEW

The VHSL Wrestling Weight Control Program involves the determination of the MINIMUM wrestling weight (MWW) at 7% body fat for males and 12% body fat for females. Assessment of hydration, baseline weight, and measurement of skin folds are the ingredients utilized to determining the MWW. The program emphasizes that the MWW and the resultant Minimum Weight Class are not necessarily the optimal or most desirable target. However, the athlete will not be permitted to wrestle at a weight class below that MINIMUM weight class identified by this program. The program also calculates a schedule for safe weight loss to allow a wrestler to gradually reach his desired and allowable weight while wrestling his way down through weight classes during the season. This supports the loss of body fat and minimize the loss of hydration and/or muscle wasting during this weight reduction.

BASIC COMPONENTS OF VHSL WCP URINE SPECIFIC GRAVITY: Hydration is a critical component in the calculation of minimum wrestling weight. Hydration is measured by urine specific gravity (Usg). Athletes must be within acceptable levels of hydration for body fat testing to proceed. An extensive re-testing and appeals process has been established to assist those athletes experiencing problems achieving adequate hydration.

BODY FAT DETERMINATION: At the start of the wrestling season, every wrestler will be weighed and will have his/her body fat determined using VHSL approved skinfold assessment techniques and procedures. The VHSL program requires that the official body fat analysis be completed no earlier than 1 week prior to and no later than two weeks following the first VHSL official practice date. Procedures are in place to accommodate athletes joining the team later in the season. Urine specific gravity is analyzed to verify normal hydration status, and baseline weight is determined. After establishing baseline weight, skinfold measurements are completed and current body fat is determined.

MINIMUM WRESTLING WEIGHT CLASS: Utilizing the wrestler's baseline weight and the body fat determination, the LOWEST weight class at which the wrestler is able to compete is calculated. The program incorporates a variance to accommodate athletes whose 7% weight is only marginally above the desired weight class. This number determines the lowest weight class at which the wrestler will be permitted to participate.

SCHEDULE OF WEIGHT LOSS: The VHSL Weight Control Program allows athletes, who have body fat above the 7% for males and 12% for females, to lose a maximum of 1.5% of their baseline body weight per week, which is now calculated daily. Coaches and athletes are provided with a schedule indicating an acceptable weight class for competition each day (Weight Loss Plan). This weight loss plan is recalculated after EACH match the wrestler competes in.

APPEALS: The wrestler is entitled to appeal the assessment up to 2 times. The first appeal is done by the original assessor, the second appeal is done by a Regional Master Tester. Each appeal must be completed within 4 days of the assessment being challenged, and the most recent test stands regardless the outcome. The first appeal and request (if necessary) for the second appeal must be completed within the testing window.