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# Stack on Sports

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## Albert Haynesworth's medical answer

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Written by [kylestack](#) on 08/23/2010 6:28:24 PM

Albert Haynesworth has earned the ire of Washington Redskins fans for several months with his approach to getting in shape. The All-Pro defensive lineman, who is listed at 350 pounds, made news during training camp for failing his conditioning test three times before finally passing it. Now, there might be a reason for his physical deficiencies.



It was announced Sunday that Haynesworth has suffered from rhabdomyolysis, a breakdown of muscle fibers whose causes include severe physical exertion and heat intolerance. The effects are sluggishness and muscle weakness, two major detriments to a professional athlete. Other symptoms include headaches and dehydration, which Haynesworth complained about in the days leading up to the disclosure that he has rhabdomyolysis. Fortunately, the condition can be treated by rest and hydrating early and often.

Fluids flush out the myoglobin proteins that build up in the bloodstream. Left untreated, an accumulation of myoglobin causes muscle stiffness and weakness, abnormal urine color and, in more serious cases, kidney damage. It's to the Redskins' credit that they have jumped on the situation and will treat Hanyesworth with the medical attention he needs to overcome this situation. Of course, what choice do they have? They've invested tens of millions of dollars in Haynesworth and need him to play; not to mention the ethical responsibility of treating one of their players to the best of their ability.

Sadly, this condition could arise again. Haynesworth needs to stay well-hydrated to avoid it and he just might get some help in the fact that temperatures will lower as summer turns into fall as temperatures drop. Heat exhaustion might become less of a scare, although severe physical exertion will likely continue. Can the Redskins bear their most valuable defensive player being on the field for only half the defensive plays, instead of three-quarters or higher, in order to prevent rhabdomyolysis from becoming an issue again? That will be a question they might have to answer if Haynesworth proves susceptible to this condition in the future.

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