

Basketball - preventing injury

Basketball is one of the most popular sports in Australia and is enjoyed by players of all ages and skill levels. Basketball is a fast game with frequent and aggressive body contacts, so injuries can and do occur.

Common injuries

Injuries while playing basketball are commonly caused by falls, player contact, awkward landings, abrupt changes in direction and being hit by the ball. Common types of injuries are:

- Injuries to the lower body, mostly ankle sprains
- Injuries to the hand, fingers, head, face and teeth
- Knee injuries – females are at higher risk of knee injury than males
- Overuse injuries – are most common in higher level players due to the duration and intensity of play.

Preventing injury

To prevent injury you should:

- Be prepared
- Wear the right gear
- Check the environment is safe
- Know yourself and the sport.

Be prepared

Remember to:

- Attend training so your body is ready.
- Warm up and stretch before playing.
- Cool down and stretch after playing.

Wear the right gear

Make sure you:

- Wear a mouthguard, preferably custom-fitted, at all times.
- Wear shoes designed for basketball.
- If you have a history of injury, speak to your doctor or physiotherapist about appropriate bracing or protective gear.

Check the environment is safe

- Remove hazards, such as stones and water, from the playing surface.
- Make sure backboards and baskets are of a high standard, securely mounted and well maintained.
- Ensure backboards, their supports and walls are padded.
- Make sure baskets and boundary lines are not too close to walls and fixtures.

- Ask a suitably qualified person, like a builder, to assess the safety of your installation if you install a ring at home.
- Do not fix a basketball ring or backboard to brickwork.

Know yourself and the sport

Suggestions include:

- Choose activities that are suited to your fitness level.
- Follow the rules and play fairly.
- Know and use the right techniques for passing, jumping, landing and shooting.
- Know how to use the equipment properly and safely.

Other safety tips

Suggestions include:

- Never hang or swing on a basketball ring.
- Drink water before, during and after play.
- Do not play in extreme heat or wet conditions. Where possible, games should be rescheduled.
- Coaches, players and parents should be aware of heat illness symptoms.
- Qualified first aid personnel, first aid kits, icepacks and a stretcher should be available at all times.
- Telephone access, to contact emergency services, is essential.

Respond promptly to injuries

If you or someone else is injured:

- Remove injured or bleeding players from the court immediately.
- Seek prompt attention for injuries from qualified first aid personnel.
- Make sure you are fully rehabilitated before returning to play.
- Wear a brace for at least three months after serious joint injuries.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Sports physician
- Physiotherapist
- Australian Physiotherapy Association Tel. (03) 9092 0888
- Always call triple zero for an ambulance in an emergency Tel. 000
- Smartplay Tel. (03) 9674 8777

Things to remember

- Basketball is a contact sport that can result in injuries.
- The most common injuries are due to falls, contact, awkward landings, abrupt changes in direction and being hit by the ball.
- Using the right techniques and equipment for the sport can help prevent injury.

This page has been produced in consultation with, and approved by:

Smartplay

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