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.

**Basketball 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 basketball injuries**
To prevent injury you should:

- Be prepared.
- Wear the right gear.
Preparing to play basketball
Before you start playing basketball, remember to:
- Attend training so your body is ready.
- Warm up and stretch before playing.
- Cool down and stretch after playing.

Wear the right basketball gear
When you’re playing basketball, 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 basketball environment
Check the basketball environment is safe and remember to:
- 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.
- Make sure 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.

Other basketball safety tips
General safety suggestions when playing basketball 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.
- 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 basketball 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

betterhealth.vic.gov.au
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