

# Preventing Basketball Injuries



## For further information contact

### Smartplay – Sports Medicine Australia

To contact Smartplay in your state visit [www.smartplay.com.au](http://www.smartplay.com.au) or [www.sma.org.au](http://www.sma.org.au)

### Basketball Australia

Phone: 02 9469 7200  
Email: [info@basketball.net.au](mailto:info@basketball.net.au)  
Website: [www.basketball.net.au](http://www.basketball.net.au)

## References

For a full list of references, contact Smartplay.

## Acknowledgments

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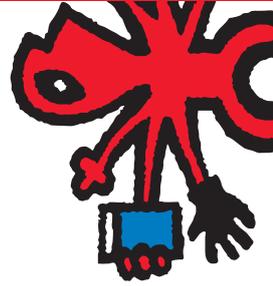
Prepared by Deakin University 1998. Updated by Monash University Accident Research Centre and reprinted 2008.

## Other safety tips

- NEVER hang or swing on a basketball ring.
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- 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, ice packs and a stretcher should be available at all times.
- Telephone access, to contact emergency services, is essential.

## If injury occurs

- Injured or bleeding players should be removed from the court immediately.
- Injured players should seek prompt attention from qualified first aid personnel.
- Ensure players are fully rehabilitated before returning to play.
- A brace should be worn for at least three months after serious joint injuries.



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## Facts on basketball injuries

Basketball is one of the most popular sports in Australia with players of all ages and skill levels participating.

Statistics from the Australian Sports Commission's 2006 survey showed an estimated 541,600 Australians aged 15 years and older played basketball in the 12-month period prior to being surveyed.

Basketball is a dynamic game of speed with frequent and aggressive body contacts that can result in injury.

### How many injuries?

- From 2002-2003, 1,244 people were admitted to hospitals across Australia for basketball-related injuries.
- In Victoria, from 2002-2004, 3,426 people visited Victorian emergency departments for basketball-related injuries.
- From 2002-2003, one in every 449 basketballers was admitted to a hospital across Australia.
- The rate of injury for basketballers is 14 injuries per 1,000 hours played.

### The causes and types of injuries

- Common causes of injuries are falls, player contact, awkward landings, abrupt changes in direction and being hit by the ball.
- Injuries to the lower body, namely ankle sprains, are most common.
- Previous ankle injury, wearing shoes with air cells in the heel and not stretching during warm up increases your risk of ankle injury.
- Injuries to the hand, fingers, head, face and teeth are also common.
- Knee injuries account for the most time lost in training and games.
- 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.

## Safety tips for basketball

### Good preparation is important

- Undertake training prior to competition to ensure readiness to play.
- Always warm up, stretch and cool down.
- Undertake fitness programs to develop strength, balance, coordination and flexibility.
- Gradually increase the intensity and duration of training as this will help reduce the risk of injury.

### Good technique and practices will help prevent injury

- Know the rules and play fairly.
- Learn and practise correct passing, jumping, landing and shooting techniques.
- Be aware of the dangers of using basketball equipment inappropriately.
- Know your physical capabilities and choose activities appropriate to your fitness level.
- Coaches and officials should undertake regular certification and education to ensure their injury prevention knowledge is kept up-to-date.
- Officials should enforce game rules.

### Wear the right protective equipment

- Wear a mouthguard, preferably custom-fitted, at all times.
- Wear shoes designed specifically for basketball.
- Consider preventive ankle bracing if involved in jumping and rebounding frequently or if you have a history of ankle injury.

### Check basketball environment for hazards

- Check and maintain the playing surface to remove hazards e.g. stones, wet surfaces.
- Backboards and baskets should be of a high standard and securely mounted.
- Backboards, their supports and walls should be suitably padded.
- Baskets and boundary lines should not be too close to walls and fixtures. Refer to FIBA rules at [www.basketball.net.au](http://www.basketball.net.au) for further information.
- If installing a ring at home ask a suitably qualified person such as a building professional to assess the safety of your installation.
- Do not fix a basketball ring or backboard to brickwork.

### Modify rules and equipment for children

- Juniors should be matched for competition on physical maturity and skill level.
- Encourage children to take part in Aussie Hoops to develop good skills and techniques.
- Download information on Aussie Hoops and Basketball Australia's *Helpful Guide to Junior Sport* at [www.basketball.net.au](http://www.basketball.net.au)



Photograph provided by Basketball Australia