

Preventing Golf Injuries



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References

For a full list of references, contact Smartplay.

Acknowledgments

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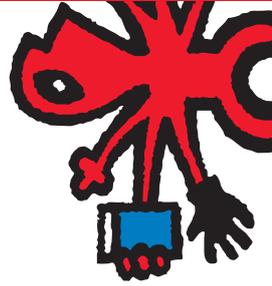
Photos courtesy of Golf Australia.

Other safety tips

- Drink water before, during and after play.
- Play within your limits.
- Be sunsmart. Wear sun protective clothing, sunglasses, SPF 30+ sunscreen and a hat.
- Carry sunscreen, insect repellent and/or relief cream in your golf bag at all times.
- Adhere to the local safety rules of the golf course.
- Move off the golf course when lightning strikes are possible.
- Do NOT play in extreme weather conditions. If the temperature exceeds 35 degrees Celsius, players and competition managers should reconsider further play.
- Qualified first aid personnel, first aid kits, ice packs and a stretcher should be available at all times.
- Golfers should carry a mobile phone in case of emergency (however turn it off during play).

If an injury occurs

- Stop playing if you experience an injury or illness.
- Injured players should seek prompt attention from qualified first aid personnel or a sports medicine professional.
- Players should be fully rehabilitated before returning to play.



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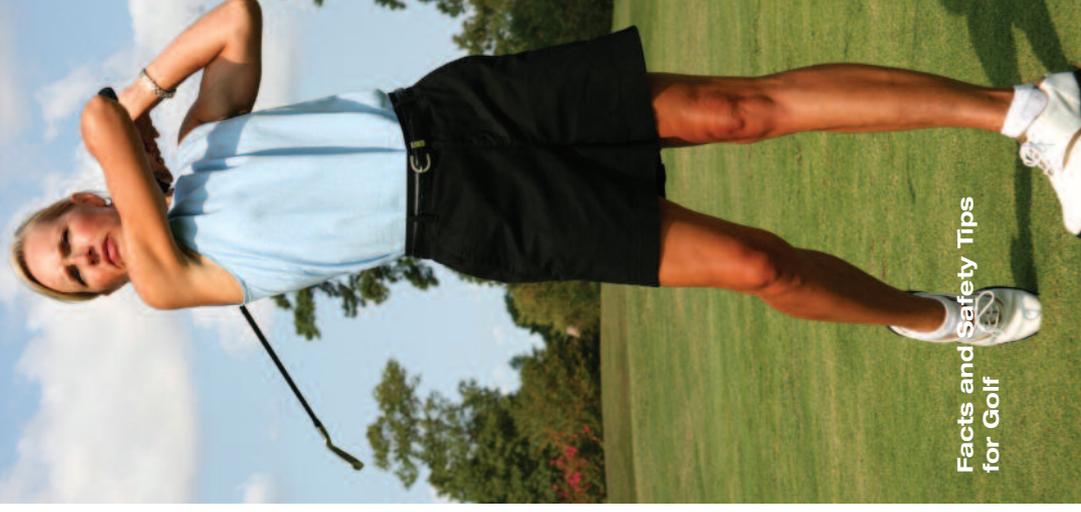
Australian Government
Department of Health and Ageing



GolfAustralia



Facts and Safety Tips
for Golf



Facts on golf injuries

Golf is a popular casual and competitive activity that is played by people of all abilities and ages.

Statistics from the Australian Sports Commission's 2006 survey showed an estimated 1,132,000 Australians aged 15 years and older played golf in the 12 months prior to being surveyed.

Regular golf can offer a range of health benefits – improving stamina, cardiovascular fitness and muscular endurance. While the risk of injury during golf is low compared to other sports, injuries can and do occur.

How many injuries?

- In 2006, 83 people were admitted to Victorian hospitals while 175 people visited emergency departments for golf-related injuries.
- During this period, the hospitalisation rate was highest among those aged between 65 and 69 years while the emergency department rate ranked highest between 5 to 9 year olds.

The causes and types of injuries

- Long periods of intensive play can lead to muscle imbalances in high level players.
- Those more likely to be injured are males aged between 24 and 65 years that participate for an average of six hours per week in social competitions, professional golfers involved in high intensity play and children under 10 years of age.
- Common causes of injuries are overuse, poor swing style, twisting the body too much, hitting the ground or objects other than the ball, hits from a club or ball, falls and aggravation of a previous injury.
- The most common types of injuries are fractures, open wounds and sprains and strains.
- Injuries to the knee/lower leg, head and face are most common.

- Overuse injuries typically occur to the lower back, wrist/elbow, knee and shoulder. These injuries are not always severe but can limit performance.

- Injuries to children, especially under 10 years of age, are often severe and usually to the head and face. Common causes of these injuries are unsupervised play and standing too close to a player swinging a golf club.

Safety tips for golf

Good preparation is important

- Avoid playing with a pre-existing illness or injury. If in doubt, talk to your doctor.
- Always warm up, stretch and cool down. A warm up should include gentle movement and mobility exercises, leg and shoulder stretches, followed by gentle air swings or ball hits using short irons.
- Undertake strength and fitness programs including weight training and/or aerobic activities, e.g. walking or jogging.
- Gradually increase the intensity and duration of your practice sessions as this will help reduce the risk of injury.

Good technique and practices will help prevent injury

- Know the rules and play fairly.
- Seek instruction from a registered Professional Golf Association coach to develop correct swing technique, for both injury prevention and performance.
- Stand at least four club lengths away when others swing golf clubs.
- Check that no one else is standing close by before you swing.
- Do not play until the group in front has cleared. Shout 'fore' to warn of danger to players and spectators. Give way to ground staff and wait until they call you to play on.

Use appropriate equipment and make the environment safe

- Lift and carry clubs safely, preferably with the help of a buggy.
- Do not enter areas which snakes, dangerous insects or animals might inhabit. Do not place hands in areas/holes that you cannot check for snakes or spiders.
- When using motorised carts, check the local safety rules regarding pathways and feet placement.
- Ensure playing fields and facilities are well maintained and free of hazards.
- Store golfing equipment in a secure place away from the reach of children when it is not in use.

Wear the right protective equipment

- Seek professional advice when purchasing golf equipment (clubs and shoes).

Modify rules and equipment for children

- A responsible adult should supervise children at all times when golf equipment is being used.
- Children should be taught to stand clear of swinging clubs at all times.
- Encourage children to take part in junior golf clinics to develop good skills and techniques.



Golf Australia National Squad Member, Matthew Griffin