

Other safety tips

- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Drink water before, during and after play.
- Play within your limits.
- Wear appropriate clothing that allows for the evaporation of sweat.
- Do NOT play in extreme heat or humidity.
- Do NOT take up squash to get fit, particularly if you have been inactive for a while. Good physical fitness is required to play squash.
- Introduce yourself to squash by playing a slower game (e.g. racquetball) to develop fitness and skills.

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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For further information contact

Smartplay – Sports Medicine Australia

To contact Smartplay in your state visit
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References

For a full list of references, contact Smartplay.

Acknowledgments

Smartplay is funded by the Australian Government Department of Health and Ageing.

This fact sheet has been reprinted with the permission of the Department of Planning and Community Development and VicHealth.

Prepared by Deakin University July 1998. Updated by University of Ballarat School of Human Movement and Sport Sciences and reprinted 2008.

Photos courtesy of the Victorian Squash Federation and the Australian Sports Commission.

Preventing Squash Injuries



Facts and Safety Tips
for Squash



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Facts on squash injuries

Squash is a popular international sport played in over 150 countries by 20 million people. It is a Commonwealth Games sport that is played socially and competitively at clubs and centres in Australia. Australia-wide about 300,000 people play squash and racketball.

Squash is a great way for people to increase their fitness and for children to improve their hand and eye coordination. It is a high impact sport with players required to move quickly around the court, whilst maintaining control over ball placement and awareness of ball position, racquets and other players.

How many injuries?

- The rate of squash injury in the general population is 18 injuries per 1,000 hours of participation.
- From 2002-2003, 194 people were admitted to hospitals across Australia for squash-related injuries, at a rate of 58 injuries per 100,000 squash/racquetball players.
- During this period, the hospitalisation rate per 100,000 participants was higher among males and those aged between 45 and 54 years.

The causes and types of injuries

- Most squash injuries are due to acute or traumatic events (e.g. fall on court, hit by the racquet or ball). Only a small proportion are overuse injuries.
- Injuries to the ankle and knee are most common. These injuries are often not severe but can limit game performance.

- Common types of injuries are strains and sprains that typically occur to the lower and upper limbs, and the lower back.

- More serious injuries are less common but include eye (3 per cent of adult squash players in Melbourne sustained an eye injury in a 12 month period) and head injuries (e.g. from a ball or racquet), cardiac injury (e.g. discomfort in the chest) and heat injury (e.g. dehydration, dizziness).

Factors increasing your injury risk

- Being aged over 40 years of age.
- Inexperience combined with poor technique.
- Poor general fitness.
- Not wearing protective eyewear.
- Poor rehabilitation from a prior injury.
- The amount and level of participation.

Safety tips for squash

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.
- Maintain an adequate fitness level. Undertake specific conditioning and training exercises that simulate squash practices (i.e. acceleration, deceleration, twisting, turning, stretching).

Good technique and practices will help prevent injury

- Seek instruction from a qualified coach to develop adequate skills and good game technique, particularly court positioning and swinging the racquet safely.
- Know and play by the rules, particularly those related to safety including interference and turning.

Use appropriate equipment and make the environment safe

- Maintain squash equipment in good condition. Keep racquets in good repair and change grips regularly.
- Use equipment appropriate to your age and stage of physical and skill development.
- Never enter a squash court during play – knock and wait for players to acknowledge you.
- Only use squash courts that are in good condition including the floor, walls, roof and lighting.
- Always keep court doors fully closed with handles flush with walls.
- Store belongings either off-court or in the front corners of the court only.

Wear the right protective equipment

- Wear eye protection that meets Australian standards during all games – prescription glasses, work safety glasses and open/lensless eye guards are not suitable. For further information on eye protection visit www.squash.org.au.
- Seek professional advice on footwear.
- Taping or bracing can protect players with a history of joint injury.

