

Other safety tips

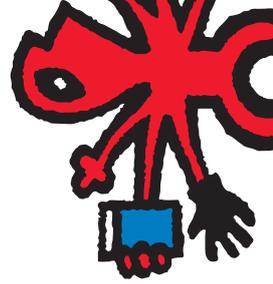
- Eat a well-balanced diet.
- Drink water before, during and after play.
- Play within your limits.
- Wear appropriate clothing that allows for the evaporation of sweat.
- Do NOT play in extreme heat or humidity.
- Do NOT take up squash to get fit, particularly if you have been inactive for a while. 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
www.smartplay.com.au or www.sma.org.au

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References

For a full list of references, contact Smartplay.

Acknowledgments

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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.

