

## Safety Tips



### **Safety Tip 1 – Risk Management**

As a coach, identifying and preventing risks to players is an important part of your role. By accepting a coaching position, you have made a legal commitment to your players and their safety and owe them a duty of care.

### **Safety Tip 2 – Safety & Injuries**

As a coach, you are required to monitor and ensure the safety of players in your care. In recognising injury and sickness, you should seek and follow the physician's advice concerning the participation and/or return to training of injured or ill players.

### **Safety Tip 3 – The Whistle Means STOP**

As a coach you will need a way to stop activity and get players immediate attention, especially in any dangerous situation which may arise. A good way to do this is to train your players that the whistle means "Stop" and ensure they react that way. Use other methods to start activities.

### **Safety Tip 4 – Protective Equipment**

Australian football evolved as a game played with a minimum of protective equipment. A **mouthguard** however, is essential for all players for both practice and games.



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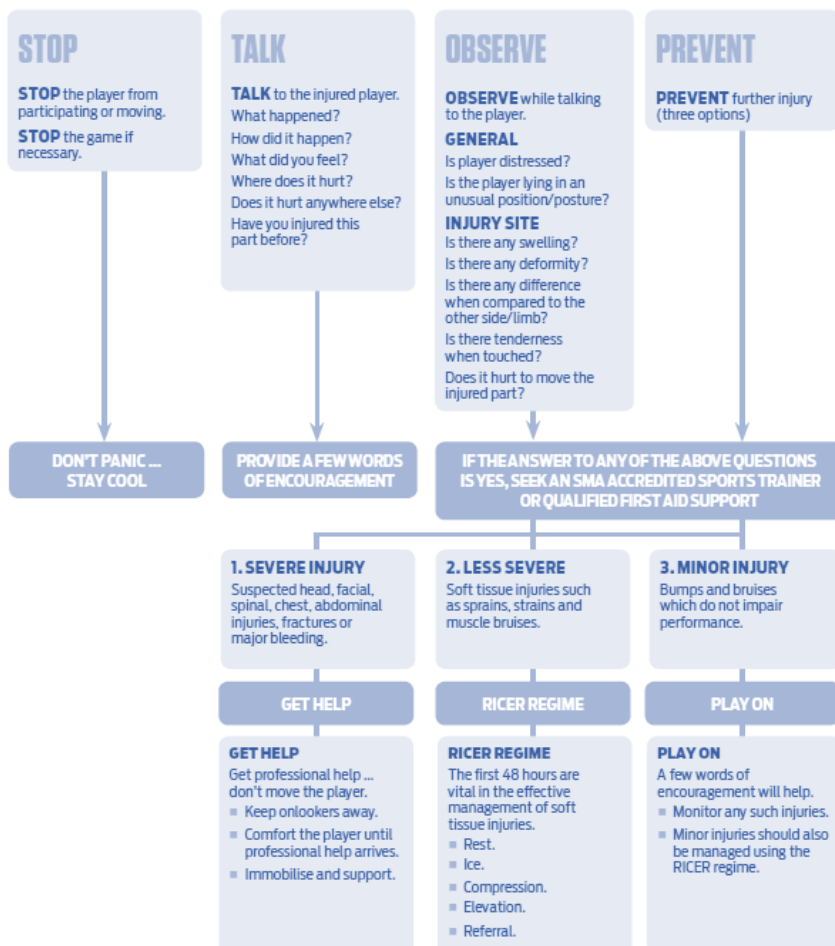
### Safety Tip 5 – Rehydration

Maintaining hydration in practice sessions and games is necessary to maintain performance. In hot conditions, where heat illness may be a factor, regular fluid intake also reduces the risk. Coaches should be familiar with the symptoms of heat stress such as cramps, headaches, dizziness and uncharacteristic lack of coordination. Rehydration should be part of your planning.

### Safety Tip 6 – When To S.T.O.P.

To determine whether a player should continue or not after an injury or incident, you should follow the S.T.O.P. procedure for assessing the severity of an injury.

#### S.T.O.P. Diagram:





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### **Safety Tip 7 – Concussion Management**

Concussion refers to a disturbance in brain function that results from trauma to the brain. The changes are temporary and most players recover spontaneously and completely if managed correctly. Player welfare is critical in both the short and long term.

Any player who has suffered a concussion or is suspected of having concussion must be immediately removed from play and medically assessed as soon as possible after the injury. They must not be allowed to return to play in the same game or practice session.

#### **Best practice concussion management is:**

1. Recognising the injury
2. Immediately removing the player from the game
3. Referring the player for medical assessment; and
4. Ensuring the player has received medical clearance before allowing them to return to a graded training program.

### **Safety Tip 8 – Game Day**

Have a plan for promptly dealing with all injuries, including temporarily replacing players, to ensure best possible identification and management of injuries on the day. Ensure that the coach, players, team manager and trainers/first aiders are all on the same page regarding match day processes and they are carried out effectively. Player welfare must always be the priority.

Ensure that the breaks are used effectively to allow players to seek medical attention as required.

### **Safety Tip 9 – Post Match**

is a critical time for minimising the impact of injuries suffered during the match. Rehydration, icing to reduce inflammation and muscle soreness, and recording of injuries to assist in ongoing treatment and planning for practice and the next game are important parts of post-match operations.