

## **I hurt myself playing – what do I do next? Advice from a Physio!**

*By Physiotherapist Lauren Campbell*

Knowing what to do when you get an injury is tricky when you haven't sustained injuries before, so as a physiotherapist I have created a list of advice/steps to help you plan best. I am also available 2 hours per day for 'Acute Physiotherapy Triage/ Advice on tournament injuries' – stay tuned for specific times I will be available at Eltham High school via Wildcats social media.

Below are some tips on common injuries in basketball tournaments... but if you're not sure what to do follow the RICER (**R**est, **I**ce, **C**ompress, **E**levate and **R**efer) principle and seek further advice. And, most importantly, if you can not perform the necessary skills needed to play well before the game starts (or on the sidelines if the injury happens midgame) then you shouldn't be playing. Ask yourself whether you'd be helpful out on court? If you wouldn't, then stay on the sidelines!

### **Ankles injuries**

- If you cannot walk at all, or place weight on it for more than 4 steps and/or your ankle is deformed (looks in a weird position) please present to the nearest Emergency Department for an opinion. If the player is in severe pain and distress call an ambulance to the court.
- If you think you landed on someone's foot, changed direction too quickly and/or landed awkwardly, but can still walk, you may have an ankle ligament sprain. Best is to follow the RICER principles and see your physiotherapist asap.
- Deciding on whether to play or not is answered by whether you can actually perform the skills to play basketball (with or without taping/ ankle braces). Test yourself: Can I jump? Can I run? Can I change direction? Can I land on one leg? If it's painful or you are performing that movement weirdly then it is best not to play.

### **Thumb/Finger injuries**

- Firstly, look at the finger/ thumb... Is it dislocated? If yes, then you need to present promptly to the nearest Emergency Department. Commonly dislocations happen with an associated fracture/broken bone, so it is paramount that only qualified medical professionals relocate dislocated joints in a healthcare setting.
- If it isn't dislocated but very sore, see if this improves with buddy taping your fingers. Taping your sore finger to the closer bigger finger can be a great way to support your finger. If it is still too sore to cope with catching a basketball it is advised not to play.

### **Knee Injuries**

- Knee pain is very common after a basketball tournament, because usually players have played more games in a shorter space of time than their bodies are accustomed to. So, ask yourself... was it sore before the tournament started? Is it more sore in the same location? OR... Has something happened during a game in a spot previously free of pain?
- If it's sorer than it has been in previous weeks, it's likely an overload issue and you should seek advice from your physiotherapist after the tournament to settle this pain (and plan your return to playing).
- If something acute has happened in the game (or during the tournament) you need to consider whether a fracture may have occurred or a ligament injury. If the player is in severe pain, unable to weight-bear and/or if the joint looks deformed then present to your nearest



Emergency Department. If the player is able to weight-bear sufficiently it would be advised to seek crutches and see your physiotherapist asap.