

Choose appropriate playing equipment

Racquet, ball and footwear selection

- Players, especially those with arm and shoulder problems, should seek professional assistance when selecting a racquet and choosing string tension.
- Players with arm symptoms should avoid playing with wet balls and in windy conditions.
- Limit play with used balls and avoid play with dead balls.
- Players should choose their shoes carefully, preferably with professional advice on the most appropriate shoe for their foot type and for the playing surface on which they mostly play (and use orthoses if recommended).

Modify training and games for children

- Children should be progressively introduced to tennis through the modified games program (Ace Tennis, Pee Wee Wilson, Little Joey, etc) promoted by Tennis Australia and Tennis Victoria.
- Children should play with an appropriate racquet in terms of size and weight.
- As children progress from modified games to regular tennis, parents should consult an accredited coach on a suitable training routine.

If an injury occurs

- Players should not 'play on' when injured. They should seek prompt attention for injuries from a sports medicine practitioner.
- Event organisers and tennis clubs should ensure that there are qualified first aid personnel at all events and competition match days.
- Clubs should have a well-stocked first-aid kit and a supply of ice-packs.
- Players with recurrent injuries should seek expert advice on appropriate taping or bracing and rehabilitation.
- Injured tennis players should allow enough time for adequate rehabilitation before returning to their pre-injury level of activity.

CONTACTS:

For injury prevention information and referrals:

- Sports Medicine Australia - Victorian Branch
1st floor, 120 Jolimont Rd, Jolimont, Vic. 3002.
Ph: (03) 9654 7733 ; Fax: (03) 9654 8556

For tennis information (clubs, coaches and schools only):

- Tennis Victoria. Melbourne Park, Batman Ave, Victoria.
Private Bag 6060, Richmond South, Vic. 3121.
Ph: (03) 9286 1285 ; Fax: (03) 9650 6003
www.tennisvic.com.au
- Tennis Australia. Melbourne Park, Batman Ave, Victoria.
Private Bag 6060, Richmond South, Vic. 3121.
Ph: (03) 9286 1177 ; Fax: (03) 9650 2743
www.tennisaustralia.com.au

For brochures and report:

- Sport and Recreation Victoria. Communications Unit, Client Services, GPO Box 2392V, Melbourne, Vic. 3001.
Ph: (03) 9666 4331 (for additional copies of this brochure)
<http://www.vicnet.net.au/~sportrec/srvhome.htm>
- Accident Research Centre, Monash University.
Building 70, Wellington Road, Clayton, Vic. 3168.
Ph: (03) 9905 1808.
email: muarc.enquire@general.monash.edu.au
<http://www.general.monash.edu.au/muarc>

REFERENCE

- Cassell E, McGrath A. Lobbing injuries out of tennis. A review of the literature. Monash University Accident Research Centre. Report No 144. February 1999

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This project was funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria.
Prepared by Monash University Accident Research Centre

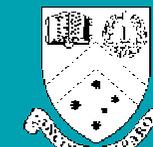


SPORT AND
RECREATION
VICTORIA

PREVENTING TENNIS INJURIES

*Facts
Safety for players
Safety tips*

MONASH UNIVERSITY



ACCIDENT RESEARCH CENTRE

FACTS ON TENNIS INJURIES

Each year more than 937,800 Australians participate in tennis. It is the third most popular organised sport behind aerobics and golf. The sprinting, stopping, starting, bending and stretching nature of the game puts repetitive stresses on the musculoskeletal system and demands both aerobic and anaerobic fitness. Both the competitive and social player should undertake a conditioning and training program to cope with the demands of play and reduce the risk of injury.

Hospital emergency department injury data

Hospital emergency department presentation data collected by the Victorian Injury Surveillance System (VISS) show that adult tennis injuries were predominantly to the lower limb (55%), particularly ankle and knee sprains.

Overexertion was the most common cause of injuries.

Child tennis injuries were mostly to the upper extremities, particularly fractures of the radius/ulna (7%), sprains/strains of the wrist (4%). Injuries were mostly caused by falls.

There are currently no comprehensive Australian data on tennis players who seek treatment (predominantly for overuse injuries) from GPs, sports medicine clinics, physiotherapists and other health practitioners.

Club level survey

A survey of 260 regular tennis players from one tennis club in Western Australia reported in the previous 12 months:

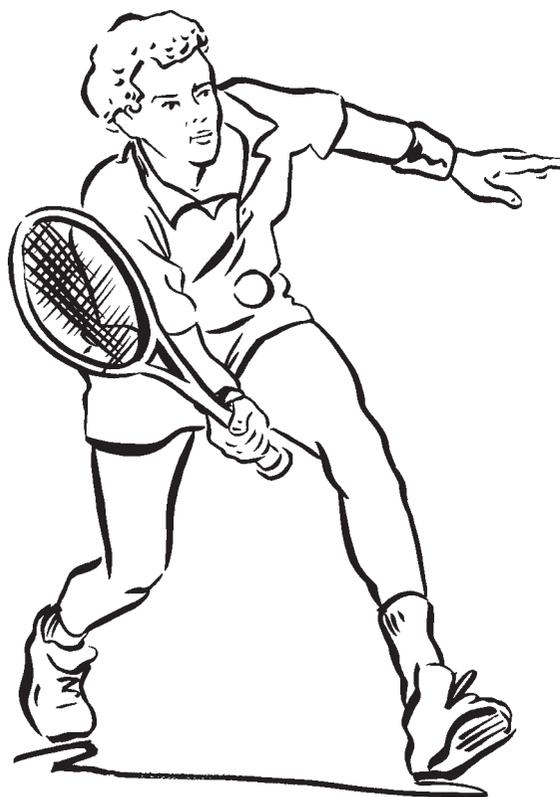
- 124 players (48%) had experienced at least one injury;
- 70% of these injured players missed more than one week of play;
- shoulder, back, knee and ankle injuries accounted for 67% of all injuries in men and 32% in women;
- muscle, joint and ligament injuries predominated; and
- 10% of players experienced their first episode of 'tennis elbow.'

SAFETY TIPS FOR PLAYERS, COACHES AND CLUBS

Develop sound basic tennis skills and techniques

Coaching and education

- All coaches should be accredited and undergo the regular training and re-accreditation provided through Tennis Coaches Australia and state divisions.
- Coaches should promote techniques that maximise biomechanical advantage and protect from excessive forces and overuse.
- Practice sessions should comprise a balanced variety of tennis strokes and other training activities.
- Novice and recreational players should attend instructional clinics developed and promoted by Tennis Australia and Tennis Victoria.



Good preparation is important

Conditioning and fitness

- Both competitive and recreational players are advised to undergo a graduated skills development and training program (which includes cross training), guided by results of an initial pre-season fitness test.
- Players should consult an accredited tennis coach on their individual training requirements.
- Although highly individualised, the following basic schedule is suggested for the serious player: structured tennis (3 x 2-3 hour sessions a week); supplementary exercise (2 x 1 hour sessions per week); tennis play according to skill level at a frequency and intensity that does not produce overuse injuries; and fitness testing every 6 months.
- All players should routinely warm-up, cool-down and stretch before and after every game and training session.

Environmental measures to prevent injury

Hot weather and player hydration

- Clubs should provide umbrellas and ice chests on court and supply water and 'sports' drinks (with 4% to 8% carbohydrate content).
- Clubs should display posters about measures to prevent heat illness.
- Players should replace fluid loss by consuming 400-600 mls of fluid (2-3 standard glasses) at least 30 minutes before play and 200-300 mls (1-2 glasses) every 15 minutes during play (at change of ends).
- Players should use a broad spectrum sunscreen.

Playing surface and surrounds

- Tennis facility owners, associations and clubs should develop and implement risk management/sports safety plans to eliminate injury hazards, such as hollows, cracks and wear on playing surfaces.
- Equipment, seating and advertising should be kept away from court boundaries, net posts should be padded.