



Infectious Diseases Policy

February 2004

1.0 Introduction

It is strongly recommended that all contact or collision sports team physicians, other sports medicine staff, coaches referees, team managers, administrators, players and their parents be informed of this policy and adopt its commonsense recommendations.

- 1.1 For health care professionals, information on Hepatitis B vaccination accompanies this policy document or may be obtained by contacting the SMA National or State Offices or local GP.
- 1.2 POLICY STATEMENT ON INFECTIOUS DISEASES
With particular reference to HIV (AIDS) and HEPATITIS B & C
- 1.3 A number of blood-borne infectious diseases can be transmitted during body contact and collision sports. The more serious include HEPTATITIS and HIV (AIDS) infections. These diseases may be spread by contact between broken skin or mucous membranes and infected;
 - a) Blood
 - b) Saliva (not for HIV)
 - c) Semen and vaginal fluidsN.B There is no evidence that sweat/urine, and tears will transmit Hepatitis B or HIV.
- 1.4 The following recommendations will reduce the risk of transmitting infectious diseases:
 - a) All open cuts and abrasions must be reported and treated immediately.
 - b) If bleeding cannot be controlled completely, the player should not be allowed to continue playing.

2.0 Players

- 2.1 It is all participants responsibility to maintain strict personal hygiene as this is the best method of controlling the spread of these diseases.
- 2.2 It is strongly recommended that all participants, involved in contact/collision sport and playing under adult rules, be vaccinated against HEPATITIS B.
- 2.3 All participants with prior evidence of these diseases are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.

3.0 Team Areas

- 3.1 It is the Club's responsibility to ensure that the dressing rooms be clean and tidy. Particular attention should be paid to hand-basins, toilets and showers.

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Adequate soap, paper hand-towels, brooms, refuse disposal bins and disinfectants, must be available at all times.

- 3.2 Communal bathing areas (e.g. spas) should be strongly discouraged.
- 3.3 The practices of spitting and urinating in team areas must not be permitted.
- 3.4 All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood must be treated as potentially infectious. Blood stained clothing should be changed ASAP, with extra sports clothing on hand to permit this. Soiled clothing should be placed in a plastic bag. Clothing should be washed with hot water and detergent and dried before re-use. Items which are blood stained, e.g. sporting equipment, should not be re-used until properly cleaned.
- 3.5 Blood spills should be wiped up using disposable materials such as paper toweling, and the area washed with water and detergent. Used materials should be discarded in plastic bags, sealed, and placed in a rubbish bin.
- 3.6 Surfaces likely to come into close contact with skin, e.g. treatment/massage tables, should be washed initially with water and detergent then wiped over with a 1:20 dilution of household bleach, which is left to dry. It is recommended that rubber gloves be worn for this.
- 3.7 Sharing of towels, shaving razors, face washers, mouthguards and drink containers must not occur.
- 3.8 It is strongly recommended that all personnel working in contact/collision sport team areas should be vaccinated against HEPATITIS B.
- 3.9 In all training areas, open cuts and abrasions must be reported to the coach and treated immediately.

4.0 Referees and Game Officials

- 4.1 Officials must report all open cuts and abrasions to medical staff at the first available opportunity.
- 4.2 It is strongly recommended that those who officiate in body contact and collision sports should be vaccinated against HEPATITIS B.
- 4.3 All contaminated clothing and equipment must be replaced prior to the player being allowed to resume play.
- 4.4 If bleeding should recur, the above procedures must be repeated.
- 4.5 If bleeding cannot be controlled and the wound securely covered, the player must not continue in the game.

- 4.6 Those handling bleeding players should wear disposable rubber or plastic gloves. Hands should be washed with soap and water immediately after attending to the player. Resuscitation bags or disposable mouth to mouth devices should be available.

5.0 Education

- 5.1 There is an obligation upon all relevant sporting organisations to provide suitable information on the associated risk factors and prevention strategies against these diseases. Additional information may be obtained from team doctors or state Health Departments.
- 5.2 The safe handling of contaminated clothing, equipment and surfaces must be brought to the attention of all players and ancillary staff.
- 5.3 Although Hepatitis B vaccination is usually effective in raising immunity to Hepatitis B, it provides no protection against other blood-borne diseases such as HIV. Vaccination must not result in any relaxation of hygiene standards.

For further reference see the WHO/FIMS Consensus Statement on AIDS and SPORT or contact your local GP or State Health Department.

If you require further information on this policy contact:

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