

- Promote the use of bowling arms to players and community members with physical restrictions as a means of encouraging them to remain physically and socially active.

Environmental measures to prevent injury

- Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen, hat and long sleeved shirt in high ultra-violet conditions.
- Avoid playing lawn bowls under extreme weather conditions.
- Ensure adequate player hydration by encouraging the sipping of water during play.
- Encourage various environmental measures to prevent falls including: hand rails around footpaths; ensuring footpaths are free of cracks or loose grave; use of anti-slip treatments on walking surfaces; good lighting at night games; and installation of ramps around the club and across the ditch.
- Provide sheltered seating areas at the end of each green for use between play.

If an injury occurs

- At least one trained first aider should be on duty at all bowls events.
- All bowls clubs should have a well-stocked first aid kit, a telephone and emergency contact numbers on display.
- Players should ensure that their injuries are completely rehabilitated and take sensible precautions to prevent re-injury, before resuming play.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:

- Bowls Australia Inc.
PO Box 6087, Hawthorn West, Vic. 3122.
Ph: (03) 9819 2722. Fax: (03) 9819 0955
- Royal Victorian Bowls Association.
PO Box 6080, Hawthorn West, Vic. 3122.
Ph: (03) 819 6177. Fax: (03) 9819 5453.
- Arthritis Foundation of Victoria Inc.
263-265 Kooyong Road, Elsternwick, Vic. 3185.
Ph: (03) 9530 0255
- Sport and Recreation Victoria.
Communications Unit, Client Services,
GPO Box 2392V, Melbourne, Vic. 3001.
Ph: (03) 9666 4331 (for additional copies of fact sheets)
<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>

REFERENCES

- McGrath A, Cassell E. Rolling injuries out of lawn bowls: A review of the literature. Monash University Accident Research Centre. Report No. 138. September 1998

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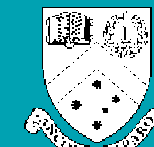


**SPORT AND
RECREATION
VICTORIA**

PREVENTING LAWN BOWLS INJURIES

*Facts
Safety for bowlers
Safety tips*

MONASH UNIVERSITY



ACCIDENT RESEARCH CENTRE

FACTS ON LAWN BOWLS INJURIES

Lawn bowls is a popular sports and leisure activity in Australia. Individuals may participate in bowls for the challenge and competition the game provides, personal enjoyment in terms of being active and spending time outdoors or for social reasons. Bowls may be viewed as a therapeutic activity with considerable health benefits but injuries do occur and can be prevented.

How many players?

- It has been estimated that 296,400 Australians, over the age of 15 years, participated in lawn bowls in 1995/96, which ranks lawn bowls as the fifth most popular sport and physical activity in Australia behind aerobics, golf, tennis and netball.
- The Royal Victorian Bowls Association (RVBA) estimates that 45,000 male and 29,000 female Victorians regularly play lawn bowls.
- More than three quarters of players are over 55 years of age and approximately 60% are male.

The causes and types of injuries

- Falls are the most frequent cause of injuries presenting to hospital emergency departments. Other causes are over exertion and being struck by a bowling ball.
- Lawn bowls injuries that present to hospital emergency departments are mostly fractures, strains and sprains.

How do lawn bowls injuries occur?

- Anecdotal evidence from the RVBA suggests that fall injuries mostly occur when a player:
 - steps backwards and falls over the bowls;
 - steps forward over the ditch, rather than sideways, when crossing onto the green;
 - delivers a bowl with incorrect balance
- The repetitive movements of bowling are also associated with injury.

How severe are lawn bowls injuries?

- Approximately one-fifth of hospital emergency department presentations resulting from lawn bowls injury require hospital admission.



SAFETY TIPS FOR LAWN BOWLS

Good preparation is important

- Promote warm-up and stretch before play to improve joint range of motion, promote elasticity of tendons and ligaments and prevent muscular strain.
- Promote cool down after play to prevent stiffness and cardiovascular complications.
- Provide simple pre-season fitness testing to ensure players are fit for competition.
- Provide training sessions for fitness and skills development.

Good technique and practices will help prevent injury

- Ensure correct technique because incorrect grip of the bowl, delivery or balance can lead to injury.
- Provide a trained coach at every club to advise and monitor the bowling technique of players at all levels of skill.
- Promote accreditation and regular training for coaches.
- Develop instruction clinics for social bowlers to improve technique.
- Promote balance training and exercises that strengthen the lower extremities, back and neck which could help prevent falls.
- Promote the use of trolleys for players who experience difficulty lifting their bowls bag.

Use appropriate equipment

- Seek professional advice when selecting bowls to ensure bowls are the correct size, to improve technique and prevent injury.
- Seek professional advice when purchasing footwear.
- Encourage players to change footwear to shoes with grip soles when stepping off the green.
- Use non-slip bowling mats with significant grip on the top surface to allow traction between the shoe and mat.