

Preventing Cricket Injuries

Facts on cricket injuries

Summer sport in Australia means cricket. Over time the pace of the game, hazards of play and expectations on players have all increased. While strictly a non-contact sport, injuries in cricket can and do occur.

How many cricketers?

- ◆ For 1994/95 it has been estimated that 195,000 Australians, over the age of 15, participated in cricket. The majority of these players were male.

How many injuries?

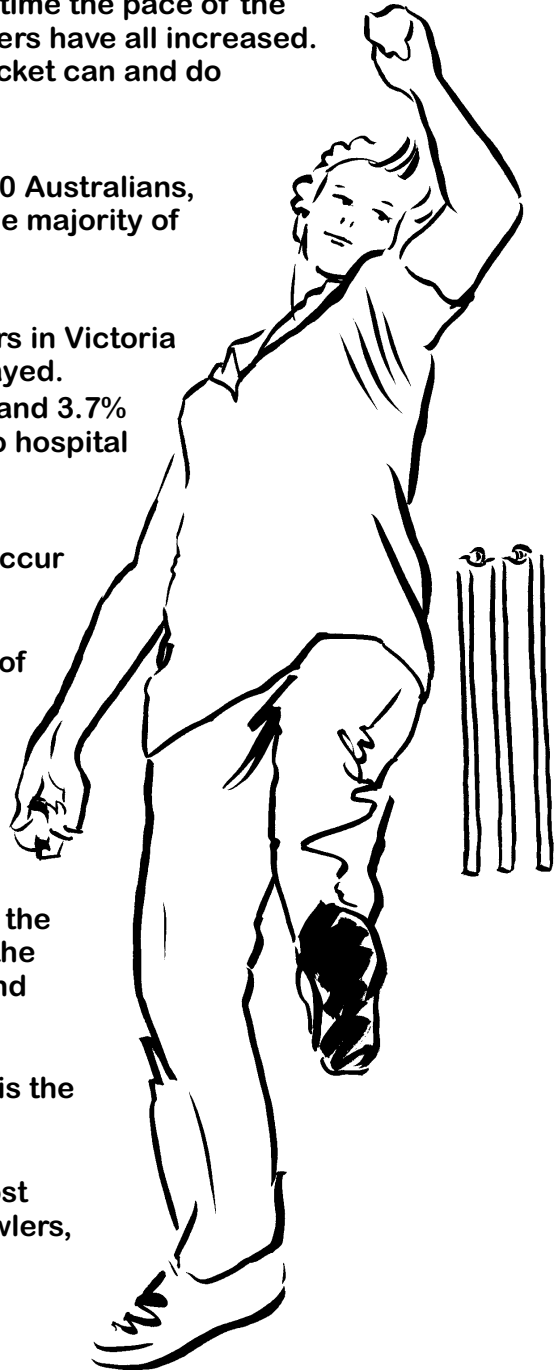
- ◆ The incidence of injury for first class cricketers in Victoria is approximately 333 injuries/10,000 hours played.
- ◆ In Australia, cricket represents 7.3% of adult and 3.7% of child sporting related injuries presenting to hospital emergency departments.

When and where do cricket injuries occur?

- ◆ Almost half of all injuries to adult cricketers occur during formal play.
- ◆ One third of cricket injuries to children occur during school hours reflecting the popularity of cricket as a school sport.
- ◆ Almost 20% of injuries occur during training or practice.

The cause and type of injuries

- ◆ Overall, cricket injuries are mostly sprains, fractures and bruising.
- ◆ Adult cricketers most often sustain injuries to the upper limbs, followed by the lower limbs and the head. Child injury is most often to the head and face followed by the fingers/hand.
- ◆ A direct blow from the ball during delivery or fielding, mostly to the face, fingers and hand, is the most common cause of injury and results in fractures and bruising.
- ◆ Overuse injuries are also common and are most often associated with back injuries to fast bowlers, particularly at the elite level and in young cricketers.



References

- ◆ McGrath A, Finch C. Bowling cricket injuries over: a review of the literature. Monash University Accident Research Centre. Report No 105. November 1996.

Acknowledgments

Illustrations by Debbie Mourtziou, Education Resource Centre, Royal Children's Hospital, Melbourne. This project was funded by Sport and Recreation Victoria and the Public Health Research and Development Committee of the National Health and Medical Research Council.

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Safety tips for cricket

Good preparation is important

- ◆ Undertake physical training before the beginning of the season.
- ◆ Warm up and stretch before the day's cricket. Bowlers, particularly fast bowlers, should warm up before their bowling session.
- ◆ Elite cricketers, particularly fast bowlers, should undergo pre-participation screening by a professional.

Good technique and practices will help prevent injury

- ◆ Restrict the number of overs bowled in any one session. The actual number should take into account the bowler's physical maturity. This is particularly important for young cricketers.
- ◆ Follow the Australian Cricket Board's SPOT program which advocates the screening of young bowlers for risk factors, including postural stature; physical preparation; avoidance of overbowling; and use of correct bowling techniques.
- ◆ Coaches should undergo regular reaccreditation and education updates to ensure they have the latest information about playing techniques.

Wear appropriate safety equipment

- ◆ Wear body padding when batting including gloves, leg pads, boxes and forearm guards.
- ◆ When batting, wicket keeping or fielding in close wear a cricket helmet with a faceguard that meets the Australian Standard.
- ◆ Wear protective gear during informal play as well as competition.
- ◆ Seek professional advice on appropriate cricket shoes.

Modify rules for children

- ◆ Encourage children to play Kanga cricket as a means of developing good technique.
- ◆ Older children should participate in programs such as VicHit, organised by the Victorian Cricket Association.

Other safety tips

- ◆ Drink adequate water during the days play.
- ◆ Wear a broad spectrum sunscreen, hat and sunglasses when appropriate.

If an injury occurs

- ◆ Ensure all injured cricketers receive adequate treatment and full rehabilitation before they resume participation.



For further information contact:

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- Accident Research Centre, Monash University. Building 70, Wellington Road, Clayton, Vic. 3168. Ph: (03) 9905 1808.