

## Accidents and Injuries Policy

The main identified risks of accidents and injuries in rhythmic gymnastics are:

- Overuse/chronic injuries.
- Accidental performance injuries such as bruises, muscle strains and sprains, ligament damage and minor or major fractures.
- Injuries from apparatus, such as cuts, bruises and head injuries.
- General accidents such as trips or slips in the sports hall.

### Overuse Injuries

All gymnasts can suffer overuse injuries, especially those in squads and training for more than 1 hour a week. These are rarely serious but due to hours of training and repetitive skills, can take time to heal. They can affect any part of the body but in girls in gymnastics they most commonly occur in knees, ankles, feet and wrists.

#### Prevention and minimisation:

- Gymnasts are adequately warmed up each session.
- Gymnasts must demonstrate the strength, flexibility and fitness to perform the skill being taught.
- A conditioning programme is followed appropriate to the level and experience of the gymnast.
- Gymnasts are made aware of the possible consequences of not doing warm-up and conditioning properly.
- Gymnasts must build up fitness (conditioning), strength and progression for elements to ensure they are adequately prepared.
- Any discomfort reported by a gymnast during an activity must be investigated and monitored accordingly. The activity/exercise may be ceased until the discomfort is resolved.
- Appropriate matting is used.
- Coaches must be informed of chronic or existing conditions/injuries that may be exacerbated by movements or exercises.
- If the injury/pain continues for more than 2 weeks then appropriate medical advice should be sought. If amended training is required, parents/carers and, if appropriate, the physio must inform, in writing, the recommended rehab programme, including an expected timescale for return to full performance.

### Accidental Performance Injuries

Most injuries occur due to poor landings from jumps, balances or elements of skills “going wrong”. These are unlikely at recreational level but as gymnasts progress and practise more advanced skills they are more likely to occur and are difficult to anticipate.

#### Prevention and minimisation:

- Gymnasts are taken through the correct progressions of a skill or body element and can perform the pre-requisite skills prior to performing the skill being learned.
- Appropriate matting is used.
- Coaches and gymnasts must not attempt any move or skill they are not comfortable with.
- Gymnasts must not practise skills that carry risks when they are too tired, unwell or injured.
- Gymnasts returning after injury or illness are re-introduced gradually, ensuring that fitness is regained before performing at the level at which they were previously working.

## General Accidents

Due to the nature of a sports hall with a number of carpets and different flooring there will always be the risk of slips and trips.

### Prevention and minimisation:

- Coaches know the correct set up of carpets and equipment and are aware of any dangers.
- Gymnasts and coaches move around the sports hall in a controlled manner.
- Items of equipment not in use are kept to the side of the hall or in a cupboard.
- Gymnasts' and coaches' belongings and equipment are kept to the side of the hall.
- Gymnasts are reminded about the risk of tripping in the hall
- Any spillages are reported to Venue staff and dealt with immediately to prevent slips.

### In the event of an injury occurring at the gym, the following procedure must be followed:

1. The coach must ensure the rest of the class is safe i.e. not left unsupervised and direct them away from the injured person.
2. The most senior qualified First Aid personnel (this may be a coach or venue staff) must attend the injured person and assess the nature of the injury regarding necessary treatment.
3. If the injury is not serious, administer first aid and notify parents at the end of the session. If a parent is not available to pick up the gymnast, report the injury by phone or email and cc the CWO. Complete a Team Bath Rhythmic Gymnastics (TBRG) Accident Form in Google Drive.
4. If the person is seriously injured, do not move them unless there is a life-threatening danger e.g. falling debris, fire. Stay with the person, keeping them as calm and comfortable as possible. If life-threatening injury, call an ambulance and inform duty staff so they can direct the ambulance. If not life-threatening, report to duty staff who will call for an ambulance.
5. A responsible person should contact the parents. If parents cannot be contacted, the coach has the discretionary right to call an ambulance.
6. Details of injury/incidents/near misses must be logged in the TBRG Accident Form in Google Drive. Duty Staff at the venue must be informed of the injury/incident.
7. Ensure that all witness' details are included in the TBRG Accident Form.
8. The attending coach must inform TBRG committee.
9. Any injury requiring hospital treatment or where first-aid is administered must be reported to British Gymnastics.

TBRG does not consider the level of sport it provides to be life threatening except where there may be a medical reason that the coaches are not aware of. Parents have a duty to ensure TBRG knows of any such condition. If there is a medical condition that is aggravated by this sport, parents must advise TBRG and decide if their child should continue. TBRG does not accept responsibility for injuries that occur as a result of a gymnast acting contrary to instruction.

Welfare Team

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