

CANADA SOCCER GUIDE TO SAFETY

SECTION VI: INJURY AND RETURN TO PLAY

Emergency Action Plan

An Emergency Action Plan (EAP) is a plan coaches and team personnel (see Safety Person) design to help them respond in a responsible and clear-headed way if an emergency occurs. An EAP should be prepared for the facility or site where you normally hold practices and for any facility or site where you regularly host competitions. For away competitions, ask the host team or host facility for a copy of their EAP.

An EAP can be simple or elaborate. It should cover the following:

- Designate in advance who is in charge if an emergency occurs (this may be you).
- Have a cell phone with you and make sure the battery is fully charged. If this is not possible, find out the exact location of a telephone you can use at all times. Have spare change in case you need to use a pay phone.
- Have emergency telephone numbers with you (facility manager, superintendent, fire, police, ambulance), as well as athletes' contact numbers (parents/guardians, next of kin, family doctor).
- Have on hand a medical profile for each athlete so that this information can be provided to emergency medical personnel. Include in this profile signed consent from the parent/guardian to authorize medical treatment in an emergency.
- Prepare directions for Emergency Medical Services (EMS) to follow to reach the site as quickly as possible. You may want to include information such as the closest major intersection, one-way streets, or major landmarks.
- Have a first-aid kit accessible and properly stocked at all times (all coaches are strongly encouraged to pursue first-aid training).
- Designate in advance a call person: the person who makes contact with medical authorities and otherwise assists the person in charge. Be sure that your call person can give emergency vehicles precise directions to your facility or site.

Safety Person

In addition to and in support of the Emergency Action plan, it is recommended that every team identify a member of their team personnel to serve as the "Safety Person". The Safety Person is primarily responsible for ensuring safety during all soccer-related activities, both on and off the field. All Safety Persons should utilize a proactive,

preventative approach to safety while being prepared to react in the event of accidents, injuries, or medical emergencies.

Safety Person's Responsibilities

As a Safety Person and team official you must play a leadership role in implementing effective risk management programs with your own teams, enhancing the safety of players and all involved in soccer.

The following are some responsibilities that the Safety Person should assume:

- Implement an effective risk management and safety strategy with your team that strives to prevent injuries and accidents before they happen.
- Assume a proactive role in identifying and minimizing or eliminating risks during all activities, and if ever in doubt, always err on the side of caution.
- Promote and reflect the values of Fair Play and strive to instill these values in all participants and others involved in soccer.
- Ensure that all players are provided with meaningful opportunities and enjoyable experiences free from physical and/or emotional maltreatment.
- Conduct regular checks of players' equipment to ensure proper fit, protective quality and maintenance, and advise players and parents regarding the selection or replacement of equipment.
- Conduct regular checks of team equipment to ensure it is in good condition and advise the head coach and organization if equipment requires replacement.
- Conduct a safety check of the playing facility in advance of all soccer-activities to ensure it is safe, well-maintained, and in good condition (see Section 13.9).
- Promote proper conditioning, warm-up, and cool down techniques as effective methods of injury prevention.
- Maintain accurate medical information files on all players and team officials and bring these to all team activities (see Section 13.10).
- Maintain a Player Injury Log (see Section 13.11).
- Maintain a fully stocked First Aid Kit and bring it to all team activities.
- Implement an effective Emergency Action Plan with your team and practice it regularly to ensure all involved understand their roles and are prepared to act promptly when an incident occurs.
- Recognize life-threatening and significant injuries and be prepared to deal with serious injury.

- Manage minor injuries according to basic injury management principles and refer players to medical professionals when necessary.
- Recognize injuries that require a player to be removed from action.
- Refer players to medical professionals and coordinate return to play.
- Promote a healthy lifestyle with all participants by being a good role model and by educating participants regarding hygiene, performance- enhancing substances, drug and alcohol abuse, nutrition and hydration.
- Facilitate communication with players, coaches, parents, physicians, therapists, paramedical personnel, officials and other volunteers regarding safety, injury prevention and player's health status.
- Act as a Safety Person for both your team and your opponents if only one Safety Person is present.

To support the responsibilities of the Safety Person, it is recommended that the identified individual have valid First Aid and CPR Training and complete the NCCP Making Headway module focusing on concussion education.