



Return to Training Following Injury Policy

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Introduction

Acute and overuse injuries are a common experience for gymnasts; however, this population has unique needs when returning to their sport after an injury due to the technical demands imposed during gymnastics. The difference between everyday activities and the high forces generated in gymnastics cannot be overstated, and research suggests that a big possible risk factor to ongoing overuse or re-injury is a premature return to sport.

It should be remembered with any return to training that the forces generated during gymnastics skills are significant, and the number of repetitions high, at a time when the individual may have deconditioned due to a lack of sport specific activity.

When it is time for gymnast to return to activity, it is important that the gymnasts are properly rehabilitated over a period of time to promote adaptations and hopefully minimise the risk of reinjury. Only when the time is right does the gymnast need full exposure to an activity or move in order to regain their tolerance to training.

The health and well being of the children is of upmost importance to Darlington Gymnastics Club, and because we recognise that many Health Professionals do not appreciate the full impact of gymnastics activities on the developing body, DGC has developed this policy to ensure that any return to training is managed in such a way as to meet the physical and psychological needs of the gymnast involved.

- When an injury is reported to the gym, it should be established if the injury was sustained within the gym or during an external activity (and if possible, what his activity was).
- A diagnosis, and MEDICAL based management plan should be established. This might include rest periods, periods of immobilisation or periods when the child can attend general training but rest the injured part.
- If a prolonged period of absence is required, a home maintenance programme should be discussed between the coaches, parents and child.
- Return to training should happen following a Doctors permission to do so AND a full review by the club physiotherapist (a physio of the parents own choosing is acceptable if a full written report is provided)
- The club will act as a liaison between the club physiotherapist and the family. Appointments will be made at mutual convenience.
- DGC will meet any initial assessment costs where the appointment is necessary as a result of this policy.
- Any follow up treatment will be discussed with the individuals involved. Prolonged physio intervention may require signposting to NHS physio services or parents may choose to remain with club physio. DGC cannot fund more than the initial assessment costs.

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- Where necessary the club physiotherapist will provide a written report and a rehabilitation plan for the gymnast which the DGC coaching staff will follow.
- The club will monitor the gymnast and progress return to full training under the guidance of physio/ child / parent. The coaching staff should raise any concerns regarding progress with the gymnast, parents and physio. Follow up assessments may be required.

This policy / procedure should act as a guideline for the management of significant injuries amongst squad gymnasts. Where necessary, it can be applied to children from recreational classes. If there are any doubts regarding whether a child should be referred to physiotherapy please discuss the situation Nick Watson (07932574945).

Whilst the Club's policy should be discussed with the parents, if the parents do not agree to the policy a discussion should be had to decide upon the action that best meets the needs of the child involved.

Helen Rondo

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