

BASEBALL / SOFTBALL CAUTIONARY STATEMENT

Baseball and softball are sports enjoyed by large numbers of interscholastic and recreational players annually. Because of their popularity, and the high-speed components of the game, it is important to observe and practice a number of procedures designed to enhance the safety and enjoyment of all participants. The league has purchased protective helmets that are certified by the National Operating Commission for Safety of Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE). This certification indicates that research has been conducted to verify the protectiveness and shock absorption capabilities of the helmet. Each player will receive a demonstration on the proper wearing of a batting helmet. Proper wearing of these helmets is the responsibility of the player after the orientation has been completed. Face shields are also available to the players upon request.

Preparation for practice or contest:

1. Wear all protective equipment, pads, braces and supportive undergarments to every practice or contest unless otherwise indicated by the daily practice plan.
2. Be sure that all stabilizing straps and laces are properly worn and tightened, and all fasteners secured so equipment is properly positioned.
3. Wear outer and under garments that are appropriate for humidity and temperature.
4. Players should ingest the equivalent of 4-6 glasses of water each day.
5. Players with visual impairment(s) must wear corrective, shatterproof glasses or contact lenses if the impairment affects judgment or perception.
6. Players needing protective tape, padding, or bracing, should arrive early to receive necessary treatment.
7. Remove all jewelry and metal hair fasteners.
8. Players with seizure, neuromuscular, renal, cardiac, insulin/diabetic, or chronic skeletal problems, disorders or diseases, must present a physician's approval prior to participation in any practice session.
9. No hazing or initiations.

In the dugouts:

1. Be alert to slippery floors.
2. Be alert to changes in floor texture and to elevated thresholds.
3. Keep floors free of litter. Place all belongings out of the way.
4. Refrain from rapid movements, horseplay, and rough-house in the dugout areas.
5. Identify incidents of foot or other skin infections to coach(es) immediately.
6. No hazing or initiations.

Approach to the competitive/practice site or travel to contest/practice site:

1. Be alert to:
 - a. Variable surface textures (concrete, matting, turf)
 - b. Steps, ramps, dugout locations
 - c. Locations of bulk equipment or specific drills
 - d. Ball throwing machines
 - e. Hitting practice and "on deck circle"
 - f. Pitching practice

2. Hazards specific to baseball/softball:

- a. All protective equipment required by rule must be worn at practices and competition during those situations that require it.
- b. Helmets are to be worn by batters, base runners, catchers and base coaches.
- c. Bats are to only be swung in approved locations, such as at the plate, in the batting cage, or off a tee.
- d. Bats shall never be carried on a player's shoulder. Bats shall be carried either in a bat bag or along the side of the player.
- e. Swing only one (1) bat when taking practice swings. Use a bat ring that will not slide off the thick end of the bat.
- f. Batting practice, infield drills, outfield drills, and pitching practice are to be done in designated areas and at designated times. DO NOT begin these practices without direction of the coach.
- g. Sliding technique is to be performed as a progression and approved by the coach before it is tried. Lower extremity injuries may still occur when players are experienced in sliding techniques.
- h. Offensive and defensive players involved in sliding or other close plays must recognize the possibility of being hit by a thrown ball, being accidentally bumped, or of injury due to friction burn, being stepped on, or skeletal injury. Be alert to the location of the ball and opponents. Assume a protected position. Do not leave limbs extended when on the ground.
- i. Burns, sprains, strains and contusions must be reported to coaches.
- j. Dugout and team bench - Players in the dugout or team bench area must be alert to foul balls, over throws, or defensive players moving towards the area at high speed.
- k. Indoors - always look before taking practice swings during drills. If you are chasing balls into a hitter's area, get his/her attention before going near him/her.
- l. Pitchers in batting cages will always wear protective helmets.
- m. On a pitched ball that appears to be headed towards a hitter, all hitters will be instructed to turn their front shoulder towards the catcher and tuck their chin to avoid being hit in the facial area.
- n. Never catch without protective equipment.
- o. Never slide head first into a catcher at home plate.

3. No horseplay, rough-housing, hazing or initiations.

Emergencies

Because of the nature of baseball/softball, some injuries will occur. All injuries must be called to a coach's or trainer's attention. Most will be minor and can be managed with basic first aid. However, some may need more intense management and may also require squad members to:

1. Stop all practices, scrimmages, or drills. DO NOT move the victim!
2. Call the coach to manage the situation if not already at the site.
3. Sit or kneel in close proximity.

Assist by:

- i. Helping with the injured person
- ii. Calling for additional assistance
- iii. Bringing first aid equipment or supplies to the site
- iv. Keeping onlookers away
- v. Directing the rescue squad to the accident site

