

GYMNASTICS

CAUTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITIES TO INCREASE THE SAFETY AND ENJOYMENT OF INTERSCHOLASTIC GYMNASTICS

Gymnastics is a highly specialized form of competition in which stamina, strength, agility, and fitness are important factors. To develop each of these attributes, gymnasts must observe and practice rules, procedures and progressions intended to enhance their safety, learning, overall success and enjoyment of the sport.

PREPARATION FOR PRACTICE OR CONTEST

1. Choose practice or competitive uniforms that fit properly, do not catch on apparatus or restrict the gymnast's movement.
2. Protection grips may be helpful to prevent palm blisters for bar events.
3. Players with vision impairments must wear corrective lenses or glasses to ensure safe judgment. Eyeglasses must be made of shatterproof materials, be mounted in break resistant frames and be held in place with an elastic strap.
4. Players needing preventive or rehabilitative taping, padding or bracing must arrive early to complete needed procedures.
5. Avoid horseplay and rough-housing.
6. One pair stud earrings/only jewelry.
7. Players with seizure or other neuromuscular disorders or diseases, chronic skeletal problems, cardiac or renal problems, insulin/diabetic problems, or medically controlled allergies need a physician's approval to participate.
8. If ill or dizzy, notify your coach. Do not practice.

LOCKER ROOM

1. Be alert to slippery floors.
2. Be alert to changes in floor texture and elevated thresholds between shower and locker rooms.
3. Keep floors free of litter. Place all personal belongings in assigned locker.
4. Close and lock locker door when away from your assigned locker.
5. Keep soap and shampoo in shower room.
6. Use foot powder in designated areas.
7. Refrain from rapid movements, rough-housing and horseplay in locker/shower areas.
8. Identify incidents of foot or skin infections to coach(es) immediately.

CAUTIONS SPECIFIC TO GYMNASTICS

1. Do not attempt new, complex floor or apparatus movements until the coach has approved your progression and arrangements have been made for proper spotting.
2. Check all apparatus for height and width adjustments, security or safety fasteners and floor cleats.
3. Check with the coach(es) to be sure appropriate types and thickness of landing pad are used and properly secured.
4. Chalk hands thoroughly before using bars.
5. Stretch properly and warm-up before practice or competition.
6. If you experience muscle fatigue or decreased alertness, do not attempt elevated, weight bearing or somersaulting activities. Rest or wait until the next day.
7. Check for separation of mats for the floor exercise event. Call the coach's attention to the need for fastening tape.
8. Only one gymnast is to use an apparatus at any time.
9. Bar competitors must pay special attention to body mechanics involved in controlling one's swing velocity, completion of rotations and general control while inverted in weight support positions. A spotter is required for all such activity.
10. Somersaulting activities must be practiced in proper progressions from appropriate matting. Where multiple somersaults are involved, competitors should add these activities slowly so as to avoid disorientation. Somersaulting and/or twisting dismounts must be learned in proper progression and with a spotter.
11. If a raised training pit is available, caution on ladders, raised platforms and at take off points is mandatory. Be alert - NO HORSEPLAY.
12. Vaulting board approaches and distances from apparatus must be developed in conjunction with the coach and checked by the gymnast before practicing or competing.
13. Use only trained spotters.

EMERGENCIES

Because of the nature of gymnastics, some injuries may occur. Most will be minor and can be managed with basic first aid. All injuries must be called to a coach's attention. However, an occasional situation may require more intense management and may also necessitate involvement of squad members as follows:

1. Stop all practices or drills.
2. Call the coach to manage the situation if he is not already at the site.
3. Sit or kneel in close proximity.
4. Assist by:
 - a. Calling for additional assistance
 - b. Bringing first aid equipment or supplies to the site
 - c. Keeping onlookers away
 - d. Directing rescue team members to the site
5. Fire or fire alarm:
 - a. Evacuate or remain outside the building
 - b. Move 100 yards from the building
 - c. Be prepared to implement the emergency procedures outlined in #4.