SAFE & FAIR SPORT

Safeguarding Policy

PAIN, INJURY + ILLNESS GUIDANCE FOR GOOD PRACTICES



V1/ JUNE 2024

British Gymnastics · English Gymnastics · Gymnastics Northern Ireland · Scottish Gymnastics · Welsh Gymnastics / Gymnasteg Cymru

What's included in the Safeguarding Policy:

PAIN, INJURY + ILLNESS GUIDANCE FOR GOOD PRACTICES

- Introduction
- Useful links
- Guidance for good pain, injury and illness practices
- Pain scales for gymnasts

Introduction

- Everyone in gymnastics has a responsibility to create a safe and uplifting gymnastics experience for all. The Safeguarding Policy: Pain, Injury & Illness outlines the mandatory points which clubs and coaches must follow to ensure safe practices around pain, injury and illness are implemented.

- This guidance has been developed to supplement the Safeguarding Policy: Pain, Injury & Illness. The purpose of this guidance is to provide clubs and coaches with further information to empower them to apply good practice.

Useful links

UK Coaching / Return to Play (RTP) flow chart (ukcoaching.org)

UK Coaching / Understanding Common Injuries, Causes and Treatment - UK Coaching

UK Coaching / Coaching female participants

UK Coaching / A Guide to Mental Health and Well-being - UK Coaching

Mental Health Awareness Webinar People Development / Free for BG members - Introduction to Mental Health Awareness

Pain, injury & illness guidance for good practices

Clubs and coaches should endeavour to create an environment where gymnasts feel they are able to be open and honest about any pain, injury, or illness. Here's some tips on how to create this environment:



1. Encourage gymnasts to report any pain, injury, or illness as soon as possible.



2. Always respect a gymnast's report of pain, injury, and illness.

3. Encourage open discussions between gymnasts, coaches, and parents/carers (in the case of minors or adults at risk) around the demands of gymnastics including soreness and pain.



4. Educate and encourage open discussions between gymnasts, coaches, and parents/carers around the increased likelihood of pain during growth spurts.

5. Advise gymnasts and parents/carers to seek help from a qualified medical professional such as a Physiotherapist, Sports Doctor, or GP, if a gymnast's pain:



a. Is moderate or severe in nature (the pain scale is one way to help a gymnast understand their pain), OR
b. Lasts for 3 or more consecutive days, OR
c. Impacts on gymnastics activity for 3 or more consecutive sessions, OR
d. Is perceived to require pain relieving or anti-inflammatory medication.

Clubs should share the **'What do I need to know about pain, injury and illness if I'm a gymnast?** 'and **'What do I need to know if I'm a parent/carer?'** with their members and their parents/carers.









6. The pain scale is one method to help a gymnast describe the severity of their pain. Please see page 5 for more detail on pain scales.

7. When a gymnast is returning to training following pain, injury or illness there are many factors to consider to help decide when the gymnast is ready physically to progress and start the activity. UK Coaching have a useful resource to assist coaches, gymnasts, and parents/carers with return to gymnastics decisions **RTP flow chart** (ukcoaching.org)



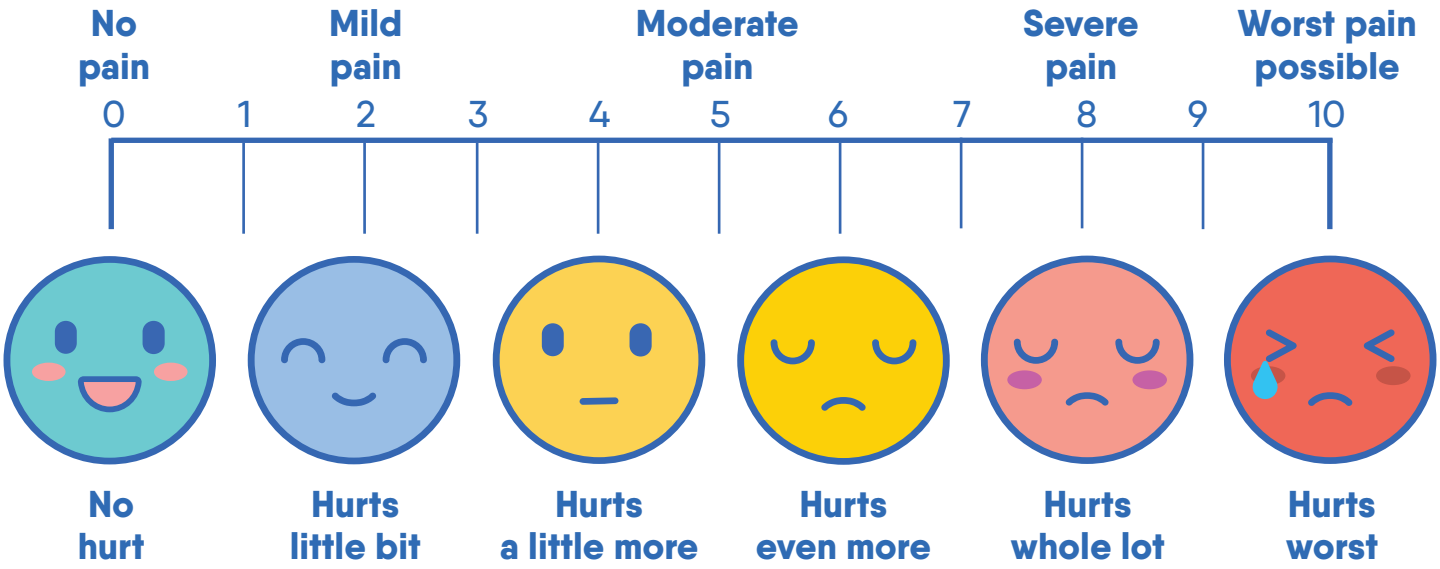
8. Female athletes experience a wide range of physical, affective, and psychological symptoms during their menstrual cycle (period) that may impact on training and competition. UK Coaching have a series of resources to support clubs and coaches working with female athletes – **Coaching female participants**

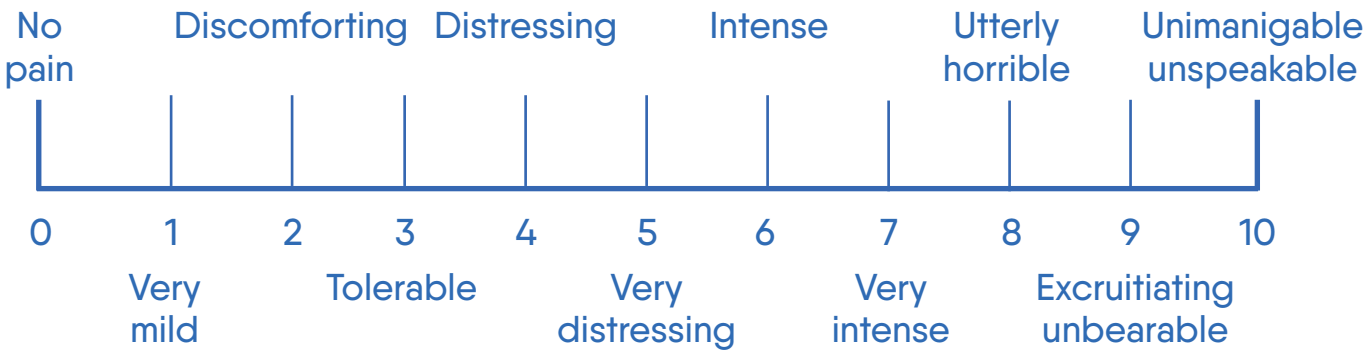


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Pain scales for gymnasts

Pain scales can be a useful tool to help gymnasts describe the severity of their pain. There are lots of different pain scales, some might be more appropriate than others depending on the age of the gymnast.





It might be easier for some gymnasts to describe their pain level using the faces pain rating scale (Wong-Baker FACES Pain Rating Scale). This is recommended for gymnasts aged 3 years or older. You should explain to the gymnast that each face is for a person who feels happy because they have no pain (hurt) or sad because they have some or a lot of pain. Ask the gymnast to describe how they are feeling.

The numerical scales might be more suitable for gymnasts aged 8 years or older. You should explain to the gymnast that zero is no pain at all and 10 is the worst pain possible, ask the gymnast to describe how they are feeling.

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