

# PREVENTING INJURIES

## Essential Injury Prevention Tips for Every Athlete

*Injury is your setback — train smart, recover well, and keep your body strong!*

### **WHEN DO INJURIES OCCUR?**

- Trauma injuries can happen in whitewater, Canoe Polo, or Kayak Cross due to collisions, capsizes, or impact with rocks or paddles.
- Most injuries, however, occur during training from repetitive loading of muscles, tendons, and bones — especially in teenagers and young adults while their bodies are still maturing.
- A well-structured training program should gradually increase volume and intensity while allowing for rest and recovery. More training does not always mean better performance.

### **WARM-UP BEFORE TRAINING**

- Warming up prepares your heart, lungs, muscles, and nervous system for work and reduces the risk of strains or tears.
- It takes 8–10 minutes of gradually increasing activity to fully warm up — don't rush it.

#### ***Warm-up type depends on the session:***

- Low intensity sessions (e.g., recovery paddles): may not need a separate warm-up.
- Heavy sessions (e.g., weights): focus on the specific muscle groups you'll use.

#### ***Good warm-up elements include:***

- Light cardio (land-based exercises or easy paddling).
- Gentle flexibility work for neck, back, shoulders, and legs.
- Resistance bands to activate key muscles.

⚠ Ask your coach or physio for tailored warm-up routines.

### **LACTIC ACID & COOL DOWN**

- Intense training produces lactic acid, causing pain and fatigue.
- A cool down period helps flush lactic acid, aiding recovery and reducing soreness.
- Keep exercising at a low intensity after your session to keep blood flowing.
- Tired muscles can't support quality training and are more prone to injury.

### **STRENGTH & CONDITIONING**

- A well-designed strength and conditioning program helps prevent injury, especially to the shoulders and back — the most common injury sites in paddlesports.

#### ***Focus on:***

- *Shoulder stability* — use resistance bands regularly.
- *Core strength* — strong abdominal and back muscles provide a stable base to transfer power efficiently.

#### ***Learn and maintain***

##### ***good technique to reduce injury risk:***

- Practice with mirrors, video feedback, or coach supervision.
- Watch examples of good technique online.

### **OFF THE WATER**

- Injuries often happen during other sports or activities, especially if you're not experienced.
- Be cautious with activities like football or downhill biking, especially before races or training camps.
- Many paddlers have been injured from non-paddling activities during critical periods.

### **REST & RECOVERY**

- Rest is a crucial part of training — not laziness.
- Training breaks down muscle fibers; rest allows them to rebuild stronger.
- Take at least one full day between weight training sessions.
- Use periodization: build training intensity over 3–4 weeks, then reduce to allow recovery.
- Listen to your body: if you're exhausted, tell your coach. Training when overtired increases injury risk.



### **KEY TAKEAWAYS**

Most injuries are preventable through smart training, good preparation, and rest.

Warm up, cool down, and listen to your body.

Build strength and technique progressively.

Be smart off the water — avoid unnecessary risks before important events.