

University of Limerick Tag Rugby Club

Health and Safety Statement

Tag is a soft-contact sport that is an enjoyable, fun and active way to keep fit and healthy throughout the year and the health and safety of players is hugely important to us.

As with many sports, contact, whether accidental or deliberate, is penalised by the referee - but it is not possible to eliminate contact completely. And, although there are no scrums or line-outs and tackling is not permitted, as in all sports, some injuries may occur.

The most common are muscle strains and pulls from not being warmed up properly, as well as some minor bumps and bruises. More serious injuries can also occur, especially to fingers and thumbs while grabbing for an opponent's tag.

HAND & FINGER INJURIES

Hand and finger injuries in Tag are quite common. The good news is that most are not serious but it is important to remember that, with fingers and thumb injuries, early diagnosis is crucial to ensure that you do not suffer any long-term effects. Most of the Tag hand injuries are from catching or snagging the fingers or thumbs in shorts or jerseys when pulling a tag off the opponent.

What to do if You have a Suspected Hand / Finger Injury?

- Whatever the type of injury, the correct implementation of the PRICED principles are essential during the initial 48-72 hours when managing acute injuries.
 - o **P**rotect
 - o **R**est
 - o **I**ce
 - o **C**ompression
 - o **E**levation
 - o **D**iagnosis
- Stop playing immediately
- If you are worried that your hand/ wrist injury is serious, consult a medical practitioner or visit your local A&E Dept immediately.

Here are some of the most common hand injuries from Tag:

1. Finger Sprain
2. Thumb Sprain
3. Finger / Thumb Fracture

Personal Accident Insurance

Upon paying their membership Students are under the insurance and cover of the University of Limerick and must follow the procedures in place by the C&S department University of Limerick.

INJURY PREVENTION

As with any sport, injuries can occur when playing Tag. The risk of accidents though can be minimized by following these simple guidelines:

1. Tag Shorts

For health and safety reasons, all players in UL Leagues & Blitzes must wear Official Tag Shorts. Official Tag Shorts do not have any pockets and so significantly reduce finger injuries caused by grabbing a tag.

We do not allow tag belts in our Leagues & Blitzes as players wearing belts have previously gotten their fingers caught in the shorts pocket / tshirt of those they are tackling, often damaging their fingers or thumbs.

2. Footwear

If you are buying new boots specifically for tag, we recommend you buy a pair of astro boots, as they can be worn on all types of surface, including water-based Astro, all weather, grass and even beach!

If you are playing in a grass venue and it is raining, then moulded or rubber-studded boots are a good option as they will give you more grip and you won't be sliding around the place!

Runners are good all year round on Astro and All Weather Surfaces and on grass when it's dry but are not recommended in wet conditions, as you can easily slip and hurt yourself or another player.

3. Eye Protection

As with all sports, there can be some contact between players playing Tag. Therefore, for health and safety reasons, spectacles and sunglasses are not allowed while playing. If you need to wear corrective lenses, please wear either contact lenses or prescription polycarbonate goggles, which have been designed especially for sports use. All eye protection should fit securely and have cushions above your eyebrows and over your nose.

4. Jewellery

Players are not allowed to wear any jewellery - watches, rings, bracelets, necklaces, earrings, rubber wrist bands etc – during games, as it could injure the player or an opponent. If the referee spots a player wearing jewellery, they will be asked to leave the pitch immediately until it has been removed. This player cannot be substituted while off the pitch.

If certain jewellery, such as wedding rings, bracelets etc, cannot be taken off, they should be taped up so that no part is free to move and no sharp or raised edges are exposed.

Please note that rubber wrist bands are not allowed, as opponents may get their fingers caught while trying to tag the player.

5. Warming Up / Cooling Down

Please make sure that you and all members of your team do a proper warm up before and cool down after each match you play to reduce muscle strain etc. You can find recommended exercises on the back of your team's registration form

FIRST AID AT YOUR VENUE

First Aid Kit

Our UL venues will have a basic First Aid Kit, which will be held by the Health and Safety Officer . The kit will contain basic first aid equipment that can be used to treat any cuts and bruises received by a player. Ice may also be available; either from instant ice packs in the First Aid Kit or from the venue bar (if available).

Please note that the First Aid Kit is primarily for minor cuts and bruises and does not contain more advanced medical treatments. We recommend that each player bring a supply of items, such as blister pads, Deep Heat spray/rub and strapping for any muscle strains or pulls that may occur while playing.

While a H&S may have basic First Aid, they are not medical professionals. Their role is to manage and care for the general welfare of all players.

Hospital Treatment

If the injury is more serious and the player need to go to A&E, the Health and Safety Officer can call an ambulance (or taxi) to take the injured player to the local hospital.

Accident Reporting

If you get injured playing Tag, please inform your Venue Manager or Health and Safety Officer immediately. As well as assisting with the injury, the VM will fill out an Accident Report Form and forward it to the committee , allowing us track the types of injuries that occur and develop specific First Aid plans for each venue.

If you do not report the accident to your VM, we will not have a record of it and it may affect any insurance claim you are looking to make.

Alcohol & Recreational Drugs

Alcohol and recreational drugs pose significant risk of injury to yourself and other players. Because of this, we reserve the right to disqualify / remove any team from a tournament if we suspect a player is under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs.

If you are disqualified or removed from a Tag Event, you will not be entitled to a refund. Players are under the guidelines of the clubs code of conduct at all times.