



TOTAL MARTIAL ARTS CENTRE

INFECTION CONTROL POLICY

The Total Martial Arts Centre will do everything possible to prevent the transmission of infectious disease during training activities and associated events by providing the necessary training and equipment to all personnel.

Introduction

Infectious diseases may be extremely debilitating and potentially hazardous for Total Martial Arts Centre and/or individual(s) concerned. These diseases may be spread by direct contact between broken skin or mucous membranes, infected blood and other body fluids and substances.

Note: There is no current evidence that sweat, urine or tears will transmit these infectious viruses.

The following information and recommendations may reduce the risk of transmitting infectious diseases.

Types of Infections

- **Blood-Borne Viruses**

Viruses, like other microscopic organisms, live in, on and around us all the time. When they (a) exist in sufficient quantities, (b) are able to spread from someone or something (like food or animals) and (c) enter your body, they can cause disease. When our bodies are under stress, for example during periods of intensive training for competition, we are more susceptible to illness caused by these tiny germs.

Blood-borne viruses are those which are transmitted from one person's blood to another person's blood stream.

- **Hepatitis**

Hepatitis means inflammation of the liver. The liver is responsible for filtering the blood and breaking down food and poisons in the body. Viral hepatitis (often simply called hepatitis) refers to a number of different viruses which affect the liver and can potentially cause fever, vomiting, jaundice (where the eyes and skin go yellow) or sometimes permanent liver damage, even cancer. Sometimes people with hepatitis have no obvious symptoms but may still be able to infect others. The most significant types of hepatitis are A, B & C and these are described at the rear of this paper in *Additional Information*.

Several new types of hepatitis have been discovered in recent years (hepatitis D, E, & G), and it is possible that more strains will be identified in the future. Other forms of hepatitis (non-viral) can be caused by alcohol or drug abuse (including steroids).

- **Other Infections**

There are a number of other infectious diseases, caused by viruses, bacteria, fungi and tiny parasites that can have an effect on the health and performance of people participating in sport. Some may be transmitted during play, some through social activities after training. The way in which they are passed on from person to person varies and some are more serious than others, particularly if left untreated.

How Infections can Spread Through Sport

People can be exposed to infection through participation in sport in a variety of ways:

- Through blood to blood contact via broken skin and open wounds. Of most concern are the serious blood-borne viruses such as HIV and hepatitis C.
- Through contact between a person's broken skin, mouth, eyes and other mucous membranes with another person's infected body fluid (blood, saliva, semen and vaginal fluids). A number of serious infections are possible, including those which are sexually transmitted.
- Through exposure of the skin to another person's infected skin or body fluids. This may be via direct body to body contact or indirectly through the use of shared equipment (e.g. wrestling mats), clothing (e.g. jumpers, socks) and other surfaces that remain moist for a period of time (shower floors, rub down benches). These usually involve fungal skin infections such as tinea, viral infections such as warts, or parasites such as scabies.
- Through ingestion of contaminated food and drinks. If people handling food don't wash their hands properly, hepatitis A or a number of other infectious diseases, such as those which cause gastroenteritis, can be passed on.
- By breathing in airborne droplets of saliva or sputum when an infectious person coughs, sneezes or spits. The common cold and the flu are easily passed on from person to person in this way.

Risk of Infection Through Sport

The risk of being infected by one of the serious blood-borne viruses through participation in sport is very low.

"The chances [of being infected by HIV through sport] have been estimated to be 1 in 125 million. Your chances of getting killed driving to the football stadium are infinitely greater....."

Professor John Dwyer
Immunologist [ABC News]
Blood Rules, OK Video

By adopting an Infection Policy and implementing Blood Rules and other preventive strategies consistently in our organisation we are attempting to make these risks even lower.

Procedures for Minimising the Risks of Infection

- Medical information forms must be completed prior to enrolment at the Total Martial Arts Centre.
- Total Martial Arts Centre staff must be informed by students of any change in medical condition that is likely to lead to the spread of infectious diseases.
- It is every participant's responsibility to maintain strict personal hygiene at all times.
- All participants with prior evidence of infectious diseases are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation in contact/collision sports.
- All open cuts and abrasions must be reported and treated immediately.

- Fingernails and toenails must be kept short and neatly trimmed to prevent causing cuts and injuries to other participants.
- TMAC will ensure that the toilets and all common area's (including dressing rooms) are clean and tidy. Particular attention will be paid to hand-basins and toilets. Adequate soap, paper hand towels, brooms, refuse disposal bins and disinfectants will be available at all times.
- All clothing, equipment and surfaces contaminated by blood must be treated as potentially infectious. Equipment and surfaces will be cleaned or changed immediately if soiling or spills occur.
- Cleaning of blood and body substances will involve:
 - gloves being worn;
 - if the blood spill is large then it will be confined and contained;
 - removing the bulk of the blood and body substances with absorbent material, e.g. paper towels; and
 - placing the paper towels in a sealed plastic bag and disposal via normal garbage. The spill site will be cleaned with a detergent solution,
- Hands must be washed after removal and disposal of gloves.
- Routine laundry procedures are adequate for the processing of all linen, however in order to decontaminate laundry items, it is recommended that clothing with dried blood on it be disinfected prior to a normal detergent wash.
- Gloves will be worn when handling or washing soiled linen. General utility gloves, (i.e. rubber household gloves), can be used for this task. The gloves should be washed in detergent after use, or discarded if they are peeled, cracked, discoloured, torn, punctured or have other evidence of deterioration.
- Sharing of towels, shaving razors, face washers, mouthguards and drink containers must NOT occur.
- Water containers should be available for each individual participants and not shared by participants as bleeding around the mouth is common in contact sports.

Discrimination and Exclusion of Participants

State and Commonwealth anti-discrimination legislation makes it unlawful to discriminate against a person on the basis of their disability or impairment in many areas of public life, including sport, club membership, employment and the provision of goods and services.

The definition of a disability is very broad and includes physical, sensory, intellectual and psychiatric impairment. A disability is also defined as the presence in the body of an organism (such as HIV or one of the hepatitis's) which may cause disease.

Consequently, under State and Commonwealth law, it is prohibited to discriminate against a person because he or she:

- is living with an infectious disease;
- is thought to be living with an infectious disease;
- may have an infectious disease in the future;
- is an associate of someone who has (or is presumed to have) infectious disease; or
- is a carer of someone who has an infectious disease.

The same laws apply to the hepatitis's and other blood-borne viruses. We discriminate against a person when we treat or propose to treat them less favourably on the basis of an attribute or personal characteristic protected by law (such as their sex, race or disability including HIV status) than someone who does not have that attribute in the same or similar circumstances. This is direct discrimination.

Sometimes discrimination can be indirect. This occurs when an unreasonable requirement, condition or practise that is applied to everyone (and therefore appears neutral), in fact has a

disproportionately negative impact on people with particular infections. In other words, some people may find it difficult to comply with an unreasonable requirement or policy because of an attribute protected by law (for example, because they have a blood-borne virus).

Discrimination can occur in many ways. For example, in sport it would be discrimination if we refused to allow someone to participate in a sporting team or to act as an official because they were carrying a blood-borne virus such as hepatitis C or HIV when they were able to effectively participate.

It is also discrimination to refuse membership of a public sporting club or to restrict the benefits of membership for someone on the basis of their actual or presumed HIV status (or other blood-borne viral infection).

Nevertheless, in some instances, the law permits measures which are genuinely necessary to protect the health and safety of others. However, because of the limited ways in which HIV is transmitted and the universal precautions that should be in place for everyone, restrictions on equal opportunity for people living with HIV will rarely be necessary.

While divulging HIV or hepatitis status is not required under law, there may be circumstances (for example, if concerned about their health) when a player might consider telling a coach or trainer about their condition. But remember, people who are HIV positive or who are living with other blood-borne viruses are legally entitled to have this information remain confidential, and other people are not entitled to access such information without the consent of the person in question. The fact that they may trust some people with this information does not mean that others have a right to be told. If proper precautions are being taken and blood rules are applied, there is, in fact, no need for others to know. Importantly, there is no medical or public health justification for mandatory testing or screening for HIV positive players.

Summary of Infection Control Procedures

- Participants and staff should not train when they know they have any form of infectious disease.
- All open cuts and abrasions must be reported and treated immediately.
- It is every participant's responsibility to maintain strict personal hygiene at all times, in all activities on and off the mat.
- It is strongly recommended that all adult participants be vaccinated against Hepatitis B.
- All participants with prior evidence of the listed diseases and infections are strongly advised to obtain confidential advice and clearance from a doctor prior to participation.
- Fingernails and toenails must be kept short and neatly trimmed to prevent causing cuts and injuries to other participants.
- Toilets and all common area's (including dressing rooms) are to be kept clean and tidy.
- Shoes or thongs must be worn in the toilets.
- No shoes or footwear are permitted on the mats in the main dojo.
- The mats are to be disinfected at least weekly.
- Shower facilities are not available on site.
- Spitting is NOT permitted.
- When cleaning up blood and body substances:
 - gloves must be worn;
 - if the blood spill is large, confine and contain the spill;
 - remove the bulk of the blood and body substances with absorbent material, e.g. paper towels;
 - place the paper towels in a sealed plastic bag and dispose with normal garbage.
 - clean the spill site with a detergent solution;

- Sharing of towels, shaving razors, face washers, mouthguards, personal sparring equipment and drink containers must NOT occur.
- Each student should purchase their own sparring equipment for personal use. Do not loan or borrow personal sparring equipment.