



TOTAL MARTIAL ARTS CENTRE

PREGNANCY POLICY

The Total Martial Arts Centre's policy in relation to pregnant students participating in martial arts training is one of advice and education regarding:

- changes that occur to the mother during pregnancy,
- the potential effects of these changes,
- the risks of participating in a contact sport like martial arts whilst pregnant, and
- the guidelines and considerations for safer participation if they choose to train in the martial arts whilst pregnant.

The objective of this policy is to protect the staff and students of the Total Martial Arts Centre from illness or injury to themselves or an unborn child from the participation in martial arts training activities.

Instructor Guidelines

Instructors are to monitor the health and performance of all participants at all times (including themselves). They are to regularly remind students that all forms of injury, illness or medical conditions that may be detrimental to a person's health or wellbeing (in the context of martial arts training) must be reported to instructors prior to training. The pregnant martial arts student should advise her coach, instructor, trainer or fitness leader of their pregnancy so that training can be modified accordingly.

Should a student be identified as being pregnant then information is to be made available to them. Information is available from the TMAC Counter and is based on Sports Medicine Australia (2003) *Pregnancy Statement* at <http://www.sma.org.au/information/policies.asp> 13th April 2004.

Pregnant women should be advised that the Sport Medicine Association does not recommend martial arts training whilst pregnant due to the high risk of contact or collision in martial arts training. However, instructors must remember that pregnant women are free to make their own informed choices about continuing their martial arts training. It is against the Total Martial Arts Centre's Sexual and Gender based Harassment policy and State anti-discrimination legislation to enquire about or implement treatment based on the parental status or pregnancy of a participant.

Pregnant students should also consult closely with their doctors whilst continuing with martial arts participation especially as there is a high risk of contact or collision in martial arts training.

It is not recommended that pregnant women participate in any martial arts activity where there is a risk of contact (and therefore injury). Pregnant students should not participate in practice involving heavy falling (i.e.. Throws) or contact (i.e.. Bunkai or conditioning training). Training will need to be adjusted accordingly to minimise this risk.

Pregnant martial arts students should avoid overheating (body core temp>38C) especially in the first trimester.

If maintaining fitness is the goal of martial arts participation, the pregnant martial arts students should consider changing to lower risk activities e.g. non contact sports like swimming and walking as the pregnancy advances.

Pregnant martial arts students need to pay special attention to:

- a thorough warm up and cool down
- consumption of adequate fluids before, during and after participation
- regulation of intensity (heart rate) at times of maximal exertion so that it does not exceed 140 beats per minute for more than 15 minutes.

This information is adapted from "Participation of The Pregnant Athlete in Contact and Collision Sports" issued by the Medicine and Science for Women in Sport Committee of the Australian Sports Medicine Federation. 1994. Last updated: October 4, 1999.