



Injury Prevention

The ability to prevent injury within our Academy players is crucial as minor injuries increase the risk of more severe injuries. In addition a history of an injury is the best predictor of developing a future injury. This is why we consider injury prevention as an integral part of our programme.

- On average 12% of a squad is unavailable through injury at any point in the season (Eirale and Ekstrand, 2013)
- Actions with a large load often placed on a single leg (Ekstrand et al., 2011).
- The sport of football is a quad dominant sport due to the constant performance of a kicking action. This can result in a muscle imbalance between quadriceps and hamstrings which can lead to an increased injury risk.
- According to Hagglund, Walden and Ekstrand (2009) in football 60% of time lost to injuries can be contributed to injuries which have modifiable risk factors.
- Injury prevention programmes can significantly reduce the risk of common injuries such as hamstring strains and severe injuries such as cruciate ligament damage (Crosier et al., 2008; Myer, Ford and Hewett, 2004; Barengo et al., 2014)

Table 3 Fifteen most common injuries and their burden

Diagnosis	Injuries (% of all injuries)	Injury rate*	Mean lay-off days±SD	Median lay-off days (IQR)	Injury burden†
Hamstring muscle injury	1025 (12.8)	1.0	19±18	14 (15)	18.2
Adductor injury	742 (9.2)	0.7	15±19	9 (12)	10.3
Ankle sprain, lateral	552 (6.9)	0.5	15±19	8 (14)	7.7
Quadriceps muscle injury	404 (5.0)	0.4	21±22	14 (17.5)	8.1
Calf muscle injury	362 (4.5)	0.3	19±16	15 (17)	6.5

With our younger Academy players at the U13, U14 and U15 age groups injury prevention will take the form of pitch based activities in order to strengthen areas where injuries are likely to occur and hopefully help to avoid the development of any potential injury. **These activities should be carried out at least once per week.** This is displayed over the following pages:

Single Leg Jumps with Side Foot Volleys

Player stands 5 yards away from partner balancing on outside leg.

Pushing off outside leg player hops across in a lateral motion landing on opposite leg.

Inside leg is then used to perform an inside foot volley whilst bracing core and keeping balance.

Bending knee player then uses standing leg to push to perform lateral hop in opposite direction.

Repeat 5 hops for each leg.



Single Leg Romanian Deadlift with Front Foot Volleys

Player stands 5 yards away from partner balancing on single leg.

Player leans forward bending from hips whilst keeping leg off the floor straight.

A slight bend is taken in the standing leg.

There should be a straight line from the players shoulder, hip, knee and ankle.

Upon returning to standing position player should drive the hips forward, as this movement occurs partners throws ball to player.

Volley is performed with the front of the foot punching the ball back to partner, keeping kicking foot off the ground at all times whilst bracing core and keeping balance.

Action is repeated 5 times before switching legs.



Forwards/Backwards with Header

Player stands 5 yards away from partner who holds ball out at arm's length.

A sharp forward movement is made towards partner, touching the ball before peddling backwards.

Partner throws ball high into air for player to jump and header ball back to partner.

Player repeats this action 5 times.



Player repeats this action 5 times.



Passing with Turn

Player stands 5 yards away from partner who has ball at his feet.

Player and partner interchange one touch passes.

Partner decides to play a pass in behind working player.

Player turns before retrieving ball and passing back to partner.

Player repeats this action 5 times (player should turn both ways and not always same way).



Player repeats this action 5 times (feeds should be varied to different parts of body).

