

RUGBYSAFE F.A.Q.S

Cerebral Palsy

Can someone with Cerebral Palsy play rugby?

There is vast variation in the way cerebral palsy may affect an individual and participation in physical activity can have differing effects for people with cerebral palsy. For a few, participating in strenuous exercise and a contact sport may not be appropriate, however for others exercising and participating in sports such as rugby provide many benefits, improving fitness and well-being, increase energy and relieve stress levels.

Before participating in any rugby union activity an individual with cerebral palsy should seek medical advice, particularly in relation to the risk of concussion. Due to the variation in cerebral palsy, advice may be required on one or more aspects of the condition and the side effects it presents. The decision to whether an individual can play rugby and in what format therefore needs to be based on the medical advice given by an appropriate expert. If under 18 then the player's parents/guardians should be asked by the club or school to confirm in writing that their child has been medically cleared to play. An adult player should also inform their club with a record being kept.



Where deemed appropriate for an individual to participate, communication between the player, parent/guardian(s), coaches and first aiders is important so that everyone is clear what (if any) particular precautions need to be taken to keep the individual and other players safe during rugby games or training. Coaches should consider using different methods and approaches that meet the needs of the individual. If contact rugby is not advised touch or tag rugby may be an appropriate alternative.



Useful Websites:

Sports Coach UK offer training opportunities and resources to support those involved with coaching participants with a disability for more information visit: www.sportscoachuk.org

The English Federation of Disability Sport (EFDS) works to make people with a disability active and engaged in sport. For more information go to: www.efds.co.uk

International Mixed Ability Sports promote the development of inclusive activity including mixed ability rugby. For more information go to: www.mixedabilitysports.org

For further information on cerebral palsy please go to: www.cerebralpalsy.org.uk

Any advice provided by the RFU in relation to specific injuries, illnesses or disabilities is only general advice and it should not be used as a substitute for the individual advice patients receive when they consult their own doctor. Individuals are advised to consult their own General Practitioner or Hospital Consultant for specific advice on their condition and/or fitness to train for or play rugby.

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