

Pregnancy Guidelines

Netball Alberta considers that pregnancy is not an illness but a condition of health, and that to continue to exercise, including training for and playing netball, is primarily the decision of the player.

Any player who is, or suspects she may be, pregnant is strongly encouraged to take medical advice before continuing playing netball in order to ensure that they are fully informed of the potential risks.

Players should note that Netball Alberta's insurance may not extend to pregnant players who have not consulted with their doctor and/or who is playing against medical advice.

Netball is considered a limited contact sport and as such the potential for a fall or collision is always present. A pregnant player needs to be aware that participation in netball may carry risks for herself and her unborn child.

Netball Alberta believes that a pregnant player has the right to continue to participate in her chosen sport and notes that discrimination on the basis of pregnancy is prohibited under the Canadian Human Rights Act.

Netball Alberta has adopted the following guidelines that outline the responsibilities of the pregnant player, Netball Alberta and its umpires and officials, and other players.

It is the responsibility of the Pregnant Player to:

- Obtain professional medical advice and a clear understanding of the risks involved in continuing to participate in netball, including for how long she should continue to play;
- Regularly review any training or playing schedule with her medical adviser during her pregnancy;
- Advise her coach and/or trainer of her pregnancy as soon as possible in order that they may make any necessary modifications to training;
- Use common sense and avoid taking unnecessary risks;
- Immediately stop activity and seek medical advice if she experiences any bleeding and/or abdominal pain;
- Avoid overheating during exercise;
- Regularly monitor their heart rate to ensure they are not working at more than 75% of their maximum heart rate;
- Pay close attention to their warm-up and cool-down regimen and be sure to remain adequately hydrated before, during and after exercise;
- Understand that joints and ligaments become more lax during pregnancy, and as such are likely to become more susceptible to injury;
- Understand that, should injury occur, some medical treatments may be limited to them if medical experts consider them too dangerous to administer or undertake whilst pregnant (eg. pain medication, anti-inflammatory medication, anesthesia during surgery etc.); and

- To make the decision to cease playing when she feels she is no longer willing to accept the potential risks associated with playing netball while pregnant.

It is the responsibility of Netball Alberta , Umpires and Officials to:

- Respect and support the rights of players who wish to continue playing netball while pregnant;
- Respect the confidentiality of the player's pregnancy, unless the player has agreed to disclosure of her pregnancy, or it is believed that there is a serious or imminent threat to the player's health;
- Avoid giving any advice they are not qualified to give. Coaches, trainers, umpires and others should be careful not to provide medical advice with regards to training or playing;
- Select players as per the relevant selection policy and ensure that this is based on merit and capability, without discriminating on the basis of pregnancy;
- Apply the rules of netball equally and fairly to all participants at all times;
- Make these guidelines available to all members of Netball Alberta; and
- To ensure that these policies are reviewed and updated as necessary.

It is the responsibility of Other Players to:

- Respect and support a pregnant player in the same way as they would any other participant;
- Respect the confidentiality of the player's pregnancy, unless the player has agreed to disclosure of her pregnancy, or it is believed that there is a serious or imminent threat to the player's health; and
- Adhere to the rules of the game.