



Return to Play Protocol

Strains, sprains and injuries that are more serious can unfortunately be an outcome of a contact sport like soccer, particularly in the joints of the knees and ankles. For the safety of the player, Mt. Rainier FC requires specific protocols to follow when these unfortunate events occur.

Broken Bones and Casts

While a broken bone in the arm wrist or hand does not prohibit a player from playing soccer, safety considerations of the player and the players around them is paramount. If the player is wearing a cast or splint. The following protocol must occur:

- The player/parent must provide medical notification to the team coaching staff and the appropriate Director of coaching (DOC) stating that the player can continue with practice and game play.
- In addition to the player/parent notification to the proper DOC The team coaching staff, must also make the DOC aware of the injury.
- The team coaching staff or any other MRFC team representative must comply with the Dr. notice and any restrictions that apply, if any are given.
- Assuming the broken bone is in a cast or splint the affected area must be wrapped and padded at all times during any practice or game play. The coach will determine sufficient protection during practice, while referees determine sufficient protection during game play.
- The player/parent accepts the risk of playing while injured. The player may increase his/her risk of injury, either directly related to the affected area or another location as the player may adjust their play due to the injury.
- The player/parent must keep the coach and DOC updated on any change of player status and recommendations from the Dr.
- A note is required by the Dr. stating the player can return to 100% full activity for practice and game play.
- The final notification must be presented by the player/parent to the team coaching staff and the appropriate DOC



Ankle and Knee Strains and Sprains

Ankle strains and sprains have a wide degree of severity from soreness for a day or two all the way to season ending injury. For this reason, it is critical that the player inform their coach of any ankle or knee injury. This will allow the coach to assist the player with recover. Restricting the player activity level during practice or games may be necessary to ensure full recovery from these types of injuries. In the event of a strain or sprain being severe enough to require a visit to the Dr. the following protocol must be followed:

- A Dr. notification must be provided by the player/parent to the team coaching staff
- The team coaching staff or any other MRFC team representative must comply with the Dr. notice and any restrictions that apply, if any are given.
- The team coaching staff must make the appropriate DOC aware of the player's status and any restrictions recommended in the Dr. note.
- The player/parent accepts the risk of playing while injured. The player may increase his/her risk of injury, either directly related to the affected area or another location as the player may adjust their play to compensate for the injured area.
- In the event a Dr. note was provided that designated restrictions a second Dr. note is required stating that the player can return to 100% full activity for practice and game.
- The Dr. note clearing the player for full activity will be provided to the team coaching staff.
- The team coaching staff will forward the note to the appropriate Director of coaching (DOC).



ACL or MCL Knee Injury

One of the most severe knee injuries is an Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) or Medial Collateral Ligament (MCL) knee injury. These types of injuries require immediate medical attention. The seriousness of an ACL or MCL injury cannot be taken lightly and MRFC requires the following as part of the return to play protocol:

- The player/parent must provide medical notification to the team coaching staff and the appropriate Director of coaching (DOC) stating that the player has suffered an ACL or MCL injury.
- In addition to the player/parent notification to the proper DOC The team coaching staff, must also make the DOC aware of the injury
- Due to the nature and severity of an ACL or MCL injury MRFC will not allow a player to play or practice with the team beyond the limits of the Dr. recommended care.
- Many ACL/MCL injuries require surgery and or physical therapy. Restrictions of play are extended to the recommendations of the physical therapist as well as the Dr.
- All parties involved (parent, player and coaching staff are required to keep the proper DOC apprised of any changes to the restrictions of the payer.
- Because of the severity of this type of injury, it is imperative that the player/parent not press to return to practice or game play before the knee is ready.
- A Dr. note stating the player can return to practice is required before any activity on field can be allowed.
- The team coaching staff or any other MRFC team representative must comply with the Dr. note and any restrictions that apply, if any are given.
- A final note from the Dr. is required stating that the player can return to game play without restrictions. The Note must be provided to the team coaching staff and the appropriate DOC

Player safety is priority. This protocol helps coaching staff, parents and players and your club develop the best possible plan for an injured player. The procedure requires all three parties to be proactive in their communication and planning to help the player return to the field of play as soon as medically possible.