



Tips from the battlefield: Dislocated finger

With WSC's Marc Cesana, Club Doctor for the Adelaide Crows and Glenelg Football Clubs.

With finals approaching, many teams and players are going to be tempted to play through injuries, given the increased importance of the games. We talk to WSC Doctor Marc Cesana about what players can and can't play through, and how trainers can maximise performance and minimise risk in such situations. This topic – the dislocated finger.



Wakefield Sports Clinic: The dislocated finger is pretty common in ball sports, and particularly football. What are the steps a trainer can take to minimise damage and maximise game time?

Marc Cesana: It's pretty important to minimise (re-locate) a finger as quickly as possible. The longer it is out of joint, the harder it will be to put back in.



WSC: Can anyone put the finger back in?

MC: No! An experienced trainer (with the player's permission) can reduce the finger. But, with any situation a trainer faces, if you're not sure, then refer it on to a sports doctor.

WSC: What if the joint doesn't reduce easily?

MC: If the joint is stubborn, don't force it. Refer it to an expert.



WSC: What about re-joining the game?

MC: Depends on the player's discomfort, and a measured assessment on the potential for further damage. As with most important games, there is a risk versus gain analysis. "By playing again now, will I risk missing next week?" If the player does go back to the game, appropriate strapping will be necessary to protect and support the joint.

WSC: What about after the game?

MC: The normal things . . . Ice, elevation. A splint may be required. It is also very important with all dislocations to get the joint checked properly by a sports doctor, with all the necessary and appropriate tests. This will help rule out any bone or ligament damage that could create a bigger problem down the track.

WSC: So in a nutshell: Quick, experienced attention?

MC: Yes. Early reduction by an experienced trainer or sports doctor, or immediate referral. Get the tests done to avoid more trouble down the track. Wear a splint during the week and sound strapping to protect it in subsequent games.

For more sports injury-related and high-performance information, visit www.wakefieldsports.com.au Wakefield Sports Clinic is responsible for the care of many of the nation's elite athletes, including players from the Adelaide Crows, Adelaide United, 36ERS, Matildas, Young Socceroos, six out of nine SANFL Teams, the SAAFL, NetballSA and much more.