

Basketball New Zealand Mouthguard Policy

Introduction

Basketball is a dynamic game in which the body can be put under enormous stress. Based on data from ACC, dental claims related to injuries sustained to the teeth and mouth have risen in the last five years as more people play basketball.

These injuries can be reduced by having a Basketball New Zealand (BBNZ) policy to make mouthguards compulsory for all age grade competitions (under 19's and below) under BBNZ's control (this includes all affiliated associations).

The BBNZ Mouthguard Policy is the minimum standard to be applied to advance the welfare of players. Associations, Clubs, Teams and Schools are reminded that they have a duty of care to enforce the BBNZ Mouthguard Policy.

It is intended that this policy will be extended to include adult leagues within the next few years as mouthguard use becomes more commonplace.

BBNZ Mouthguard Policy

- It is compulsory for all players participating in all age grade (under 19's and below) competitions, leagues and tournaments run by BBNZ and its members to wear a protective mouthguard when they are on court and the game is in play.
- The **No Mouthguard, No Play Policy** is to be firmly enforced.
- Players are not permitted to share mouthguards.
- Mouthguards of any colour may be worn (except in FIBA events where they must be non-coloured/transparent).

Operational Guidelines

1. Referees will, prior to the game, check that all players on the team rostered scoresheet have a mouthguard.
2. Referees will check that all players entering the playing court are wearing a mouthguard.
3. Any player not wearing a mouthguard as required by this policy will be made to leave the court and may be substituted.

Once the player has demonstrated to the referee that they are wearing a mouthguard, the player may be substituted back into the game.

In the event a player is unable to demonstrate that they are wearing a mouthguard or persistently fails to comply with this policy during a game the player may take no further part in the game and may be substituted.

Mouthguard Exemption Guidelines

In the case where a player cannot wear a mouthguard due to medical reasons:

1. The player must submit a medical certificate from a dentist clearly stating why a mouthguard cannot be worn by the player with a portrait photo to the basketball organisation running the competition, league or tournament. Where it is BBNZ, the information must be provided to the tournaments department (tournaments@basketball.org.nz) 10 working days prior to the competition, league or tournament. Failure to do so will result in the player not being able to take the court.
2. BBNZ reserves the right to make the final decision on issuing a mouthguard exemption.

These policy areas must be enforced by all Associations, Clubs, Teams, and Schools operating under BBNZ's authority.