

Bleeding Disorders

Can someone with a bleeding disorder play rugby?

Participating in rugby union activity can have benefits for many people, including improving physical fitness, and having a positive effect on psychological and emotional wellbeing. However, for some individuals with certain medical conditions it may not be appropriate to participate and for individuals with bleeding disorders (and especially with more severe haemophilia) contact rugby would not be appropriate. The National Haemophilia Foundation provides recommendations on what type of physical activity individuals with moderate and more severe blood disorders should and should not take part in (see below for Playing it Safe Bleeding Disorders Sports and Exercise resource).

If deemed appropriate to play rugby, players with mild bleeding disorders should identify the safest ways to participate in any rugby activity and communicate these to the coaches and first aiders / immediate care providers involved with their rugby sessions so that there is a clear process for dealing with any bleeds, ensuring that they are detected and treated quickly. In some cases, touch rugby and other non-contact formats of the game may be a more appropriate alternative for individuals with mild conditions.



Before participating in any rugby union activity an individual with a bleeding disorder should take advice from a specialist. If under 18 then the player's parents/guardians should provide the club and/or school with written confirmation that their child has been medically cleared to play. An adult player should also inform their club, with a record being kept. Cases should be dealt with on an individual basis, with advice being taken from the player, their parents and a specialist. Coaches should consider using different methods and approaches which

meet the needs of the individual; for example, allowing longer gaps for particular individuals between activities or regular time outs to enable them to check for any issues. It is important that there is communication between the player, parent/guardian(s), coaches, first aiders and other key personnel so that everyone is clear what (if any) particular precautions need to be taken.

Further Information



[The Haemophilia Society](#) have further information and guidance on bleeding disorders.

Further guidance on sport participation is available from the [National Haemophilia Foundation](#) in their [Playing it Safe, Bleeding Disorders Sports and Exercise](#) resource.

The NHS provides comprehensive health information and guidance. Call 111 for non-emergency medical advice or visit the [NHS website](#).



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.