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IWRF Medical Guideline – Bodily Fluid

Blood and other bodily fluid such as urine and feces present a safety risk to players and officials due to the risk of spread of infectious diseases through contact with the fluid. There is also a risk to the bleeding player of infection through contact with other players. To protect the health and safety of our athletes, and others engaged in our sport, IWRF has adopted the following guideline regarding bodily fluid.

All athletes, coaches, team support staff and technical officials including referees have a responsibility to ensure that they are identified and managed effectively.

Process: Blood

- An athlete who is bleeding must have the wound tended to.
- If a player on the field of play has a bleeding wound the referee should call a Referees' Time-out.
- Medical assistance can be provided on the court or on the field of play.
- If the bleeding can be stopped and the wound covered within one minute, the player will be permitted to return to the game. If treatment takes longer than one minute, the player must be substituted.
- The athlete cannot return until the bleeding has stopped, and the wound has been fully covered.
- The referee has the power to request an athlete to leave the court to have a bleeding wound tended.
- Any items of clothing or equipment that are contaminated by blood must be replaced, cleaned or covered.
- During the time-out, any blood contamination of the ball or the court should be cleaned.
- Referees may extend the time-out to allow for the cleaning process of the court and ball or replacement of the ball.
- If the referee or a player notices blood on the court or the ball, but the player who is bleeding cannot be identified, the referee will call a Referee's Time-out.
- The team management will check all their players on the court to determine the source of the bleeding.

Process: OTHER bodily fluids (ie: urine, stool, vomit, etc)

- An athlete who has been soiled by bodily fluid need to be taken out of field of play immediately and evaluated.
 - If assessment shows medical emergency, take proper medical actions.
 - If assessment is non-medical emergency, and the soiled clothing and area can be cleaned and covered effectively, the athlete may re-enter field of play.
 - Recommendation is for the athlete to have change of uniform, perform personal hygiene, and fully clean his/her equipment before return to play.
 - If the area cannot be cleaned or covered, then the athlete should not re-enter field of play.
 - The referee has the power to request an athlete to leave the court if soiled components are not completely cleaned or covered.
 - Any items of clothing or equipment that are contaminated by the bodily fluid must be replaced, cleaned or covered.
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- During the time-out, any contamination of the ball or the court should be cleaned.
- Referees may extend the time-out to allow for the cleaning process of the court and ball or replacement of the ball.
- If the referee or a player notices bodily fluid on the court or the ball, but source of the fluid cannot be identified, the referee will call a Referee's Time-out.
- The team management will check all their players on the court to determine the source of the bodily fluid contamination.

Summary and Conclusion

- Blood and other bodily fluid presents a safety risk to players and officials
- We all have a collective responsibility to ensure that blood injuries are identified and managed effectively
- Athletes need to have bleeding stopped and this may mean removal from play
- Athletes need to have source of bodily fluid contamination evaluated and this may mean removal from play
- Blood and other bodily fluid stained clothing needs to be replaced or cleaned / covered
- Blood and other bodily fluid stained equipment needs to be cleaned

Let us Keep our Sport, Athletes, Staff and Officials Safe

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