

Role of helmets & mouthguards in Australian Football

Helmets

There is no definitive scientific evidence that helmets prevent concussion or other brain injuries in Australian Football.

Helmets may have a role in the protection of players on return to play following specific injuries (e.g. face or skull fractures).

Overall, however there is insufficient scientific evidence to make a recommendation for the use of helmets for the prevention of concussion in Australian Football.

Mouthguards

Mouthguards have a definite role in preventing injuries to the teeth and face and for this reason they are **strongly recommended** at all levels of football. Mouthguards should be worn for all games and training sessions.

Dentally-fitted laminated mouthguards offer the best protection. 'Boil and bite' type mouthguards are not recommended for any level of play as they can dislodge during play and block the airway.

There is some preliminary scientific evidence that mouthguards may prevent concussion or other brain injuries in Australian Football.⁽³⁾

References

1. McCrory P, Meeuwisse W, Dvorak J, et al. Consensus statement on concussion in sport-the 5th international conference on concussion in sport held in Berlin, October 2016. Br J Sports Med 2017 doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2017-097699
2. Echemendia RJ, Meeuwisse W, McCrory P, et al. The Concussion Recognition Tool 5th Edition (CRT5). Br J Sports Med 2017 doi: 10.1136/bjsports-2017-097508
3. Emery CA, Black AM, Kolstad A, et al. What strategies can be used to effectively reduce the risk of concussion in sport? Br J Sports Med 2017 doi:10.1136/ bjsports-2016-097452.