PASS, SET, SPIKE

Volleyball Guidance for Players

Volleyball ranks among the leading sports for females, at No. 2 among team sports in high schools (452,808 female players) and the NCAA (17,471 female players). Participation is also growing among males in high school and college. Beyond school sports, USA Volleyball has over 383,000 participating members. The three main forms are indoor volleyball, beach/sand volleyball and Paralympic volleyball.



AIMING FOR A SCHOLARSHIP

About 3.5% of male and 3.9% of female high school volleyball players go on to play in the NCAA.

FREQUENT VOLLEYBALL INJURIES

Body Parts Most Often Injured

1. Ankle
2. Knee
3. Head/face
4. Hand/wrist

Most Frequent Injury Diagnoses

1. Ligament sprains
2. Muscle/tendon sprains
3. Concussions

QUICK FACT

Ankle sprains occur often in every position at both high school and college levels. Liberos, who specialize in defensive skills, have high concussion rates. They cannot play the front row and rely on dives. Hitting the floor during these plays can increase concussion risk. Prevention should therefore be tailored to each competition level and player position.

AT YOUR OWN RISK

A SAFER WAY TO WORK, LIFE AND SPORT

5 VOLLEYBALL PLAYER HEALTH AND SAFETY TIPS

1. **Rest:** Good rest helps prevent burnout and overuse injuries while sustaining performance. Allow enough time off each week, as well as breaks from participation throughout the year.
2. **Stretching and Recovery: Make time** to **stretch** and let muscles recover. ATs provide volleyball players with important daily care, including stretching, rolling and manual therapy. Athletes should stretch and allow muscle recovery after training, practice and competition. **Tip: An expensive foam roller is not essential. PVC pipe from a local home supply store is an affordable option that still supports recovery.*
3. **Cross Training and Strength Work:** Cross training lets athletes rest and recover while learning to use other parts of the body. Swimming is a good choice for volleyball players because it has low impact. Strength work matters because repeated swings and jumps place intense demands on the shoulders and knees. Strengthening the shoulders, core, legs and ankles supports overall health.
4. **Nutrition and Hydration:** Eat well and **regularly.** More frequent, smaller meals help maintain energy, especially for club players who may play four to six games in one day.
5. **Overall Health:** Consider athletes' physical, emotional and mental well-being. When signs or symptoms of a mental health concern appear, make sure a professional assesses them.

Ask your athletic trainer for more health and safety advice for volleyball season.

References: Journal of Athletic Training, National Collegiate Athletic Association, National Federation of State High School Associations, University of the Pacific, USA Volleyball
Infographic: National Athletic Trainers' Association.