

## **WestVic Academy of Sport - Musculoskeletal Screening**

Musculoskeletal screening represents a critical component of medical screening among athletes. Musculoskeletal screening entails a series of physical assessments to determine the health and function of joints, nerves, muscles and other connective soft tissue.

The musculoskeletal screenings for WVAS are performed by exercise physiologists who have specific training in the orthopaedic and exercise sciences.

The purpose of the routine screenings is to obtain musculoskeletal profiles of all athletes through the assessment of various physical components such as;

- joint and muscle ranges of motion (ROM),
- indicators of movement control and stability,
- postural and movement alignment, and
- proprioceptive balance.

These assessments help determine any problematic or vulnerable aspects of the athlete's physical condition that could predispose the athlete to injury during participation in training or competition. Musculoskeletal screening protocols contain core screening tests across all sports, as well as particular assessments for sport-specific injury risk identification.

At the completion of the musculoskeletal screening, an accredited exercise physiologist considers results from the assessments and often suggests strength and/or stretching exercises or modifications to an athlete's training program or, in severe cases, refers the athlete onto a specialist medical physician. Coaches are also alerted to areas of concern and given recommendations about modifying the athlete's training program to minimise the risk of injury to the athlete.

Musculoskeletal screening is an important component of preventive and treatment athlete

## **Past injury assessment**

A second core aim of screening is to record the details of athlete results and significant past injuries, and to assess for any ongoing effects of training / sporting postures and the mechanics of the injured and non-injured parts of the body.

## **Looking for injury trends**

Recording of injuries and areas of concern across the whole WVAS also enables us to identify and correct patterns of injury which may arise from any number of external factors, such as training programs, training surfaces, intensity of training or competition, etc. This type of information helps each sport to understand the importance of screening, and enhances athletes' willingness to adhere to their exercise regimens.