



ROLE OF HELMETS AND MOUTHGUARDS IN AUSTRALIAN FOOTBALL

HELMETS

- There is no definitive scientific evidence that helmets prevent concussion or other brain injuries in Australian football.
- There is some evidence that younger players who wear a helmet may change their playing style, and receive more head impacts as a result. Accordingly, helmets are not recommended for the prevention of concussion.
- Helmets may have a role in the protection of players on return to play following specific injuries (e.g. face or skull fractures).

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.
- 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 no definitive scientific evidence that mouthguards prevent concussion or other brain injuries in Australian Football.

This document has been published by the AFL as a position statement on the role of helmets and mouthguards in Australian Football. It is based on advice provided by the AFL Concussion Working Group and AFL Medical Officers' Association.

- July, 2012

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