

Injury Prevention and Management

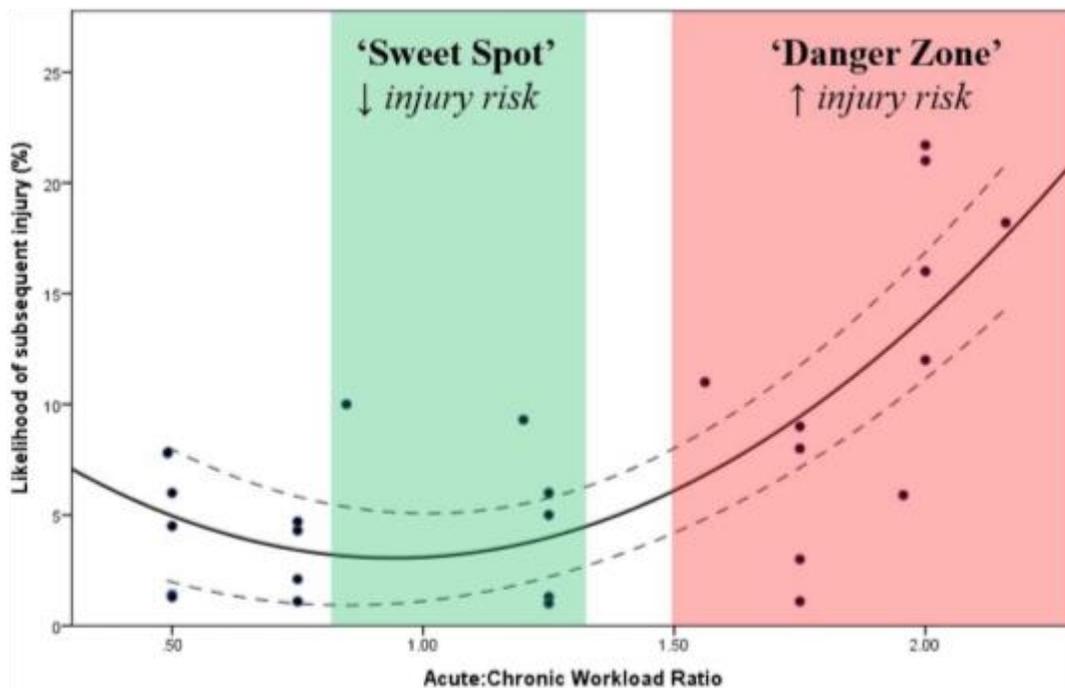
Most injuries where there is no impact ie no one kicked you, you were just running and got a sore hamstring – are the result of overload. Doing too much for the tissue to tolerate.

This accounts for the majority of injuries a Referee will experience.



LOAD MANAGEMENT

The graph below is from research which demonstrates that underloading and overloading increase the risk of injury. Maintaining a “good” level of load is the easiest way to reduce your injury risk and side bonus – boost performance.



I've used the analogy of a blister in the past. If you start running a lot, your feet will rub causing your skin to redden. Rest for a little while (a few days) and this will go away. Keep running and your skin will redden once more, maybe get worse and if you keep going, the skin will breakdown becoming a blister or worse. If you don't do enough, the skin wont harden and form a callus leaving you in a equally risky position next time you have to increase your load.

By increasing your load via training in a gradual manner, the skin will strengthen, form a callus and no longer suffer from the effects of the rubbing of the shoes. The same thing happens to our muscles when we start training. Our muscles and ligaments will get stronger if we load them in an appropriate way.

In a few weeks, hopefully, the season will start. Now is the time you need to be preparing the body for the load you expect to endure.

Think of it this way. You might be able to lift 100kg, but probably only once or twice before you fatigue, lose form and increase risk of injury. If you start lifting 60kg today and increase by a little each week, in 6 weeks time you'll be able to lift that 100kg easier, with less risk of injury and for more repetitions (increased performance)



The easiest thing you can do is count the KMs you run each week.

If you referee 2 games a weekend (8km each) and run a line on 4 games (4kms each) then you're probably running 30-40kms plus training/midweek etc.

The safest way to avoid injury is to increase your current load by 10% or less each week.

So – If you ran 20kms total last week. Increase to 22kms next week, 25kms the week after etc. Keep going till you get to 40kms so when the season starts your body will easily manage 30kms a weekend with capacity to spare. (4 x 10km runs each week)

If you haven't been running at all, well that's asking for trouble. Start with 3 x 5km runs separated by a day of rest and build from there.

Don't worry about intensity/speed/racing to break PBs, just get out and run/jog and build up the time on your feet because in a few weeks – You'll be asking a lot from your body and now is the time to prepare or risk injury when you're body decides it can't cope.

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