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Treatment of Injuries Guidance

The Laws of the Game and FIFA instructions indicate that any player requiring treatment must be given such treatment **off the field of play**, with the least delay possible being made in the progress of the match. These guidelines outline the procedures to be adopted.

(The Football Association, Medical Education Centre, suggest as a guide it would take a skilled Therapist from 20 – 50 seconds to carry out an assessment but it may take longer for the more serious or complicated injuries or for head injuries.)

Referees must follow the instruction below when dealing with injured players:

- Play is allowed to continue until the ball is out of play if a player is, in their opinion, only slightly injured
- Play is stopped if, in their opinion, a player is seriously injured or receives a head injury
- After stopping play for a serious injury or when recognising the need for medical attention to a player the Referee authorises up to two medical representatives to enter the field of play to assess the injury only and arrange for the player's safe and swift removal from the field of play
- The stretcher-bearers should enter the field of play only after receiving a signal from the referee.
- The Referee ensures an injured player is safely removed from the field of play
- A player is not allowed to be treated on the field of play
- Any player bleeding from a wound must leave the field of play. They may not return until the Referee or, if appropriate, 4th Official (where appointed) is satisfied that the bleeding has stopped
- As soon as the Referee has authorised the doctors to enter the field, the player must leave the field, either on the stretcher or on foot. If a player does not comply they are to be cautioned for unsporting behaviour
- An injured player may only return to the field of play after the match has started
- An injured player may only re-enter the field from the touch line when the ball is in play. When the ball is out of play, the injured player may re-enter from any of the boundary lines
- The Referee alone is authorised to allow an injured player to re-enter the field whether the ball is in play or not



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- If play has not otherwise been stopped for another reason, or if an injury suffered by a player is not the result of a breach of the laws of the game, the Referee restarts play with a dropped ball
- The Referee allows for the full amount of time lost through injury to be played at the end of each period of play

Exceptions to this ruling are made only for:

- Injury to a goalkeeper
- When a goalkeeper and an outfield player have collided and both need immediate attention
- When players from the same team have collided and need immediate attention
- When a severe injury has occurred, e.g. swallowed tongue, concussion, broken leg, etc.



This procedure for dealing with injured players will allow them to receive the correct treatment safely, off the field of play.

Where a player has blood on their shirt, shorts or socks the player will be required to change the clothing for clean apparel.



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