

‘When can pain be ignored?’

As an Assistant within the dojo, it is our responsibility to ensure the safety of all judokas is paramount. Regardless of the session being juniors or seniors, it is our duty to ensure all judokas are treated with respect and any discomfort, concern or distress dealt with in a professional and respectful manner.

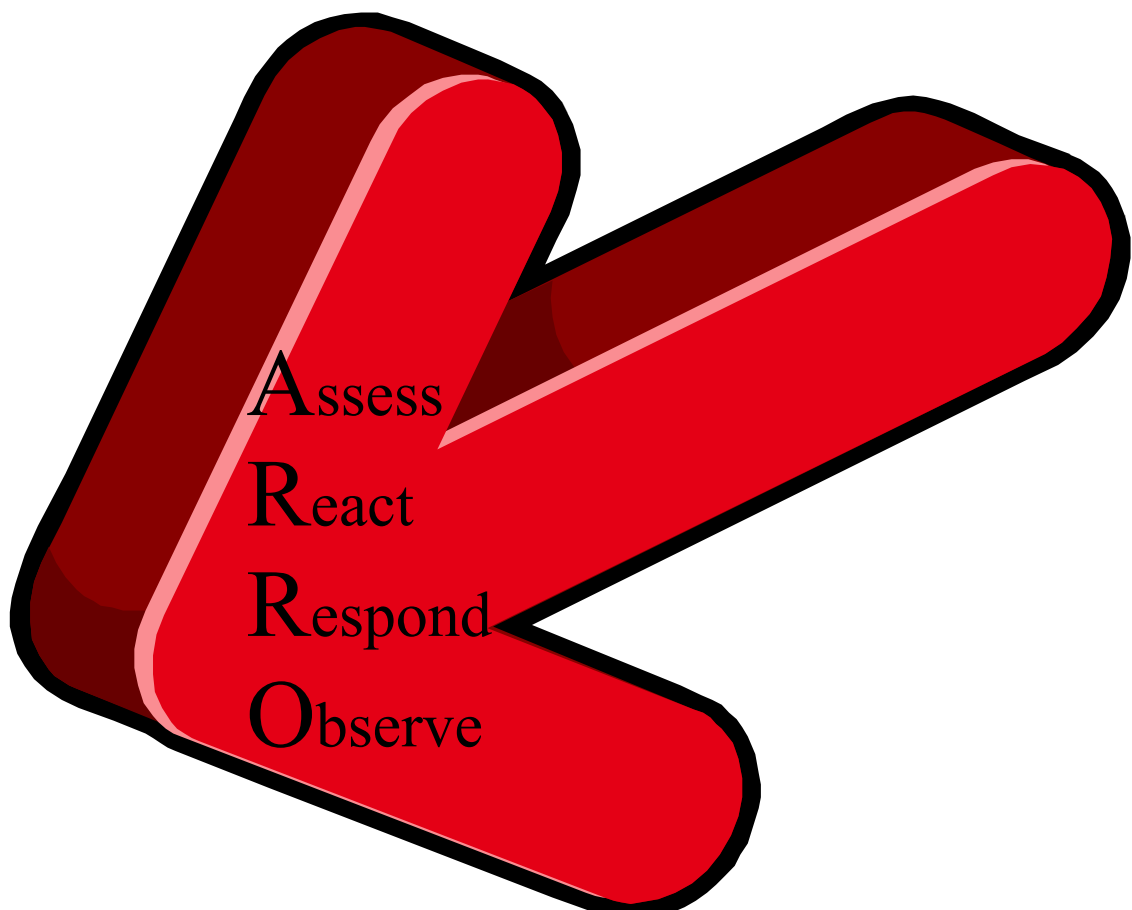
To be prepared prior to a judo class commencing, there needs to be equipment available near the mat area, such as;

- First aid box,
- Mobile phone,
- Awareness of First Aiders present,
- Availability of water,
- Asthma pumps,
- Emergency contact telephone numbers.

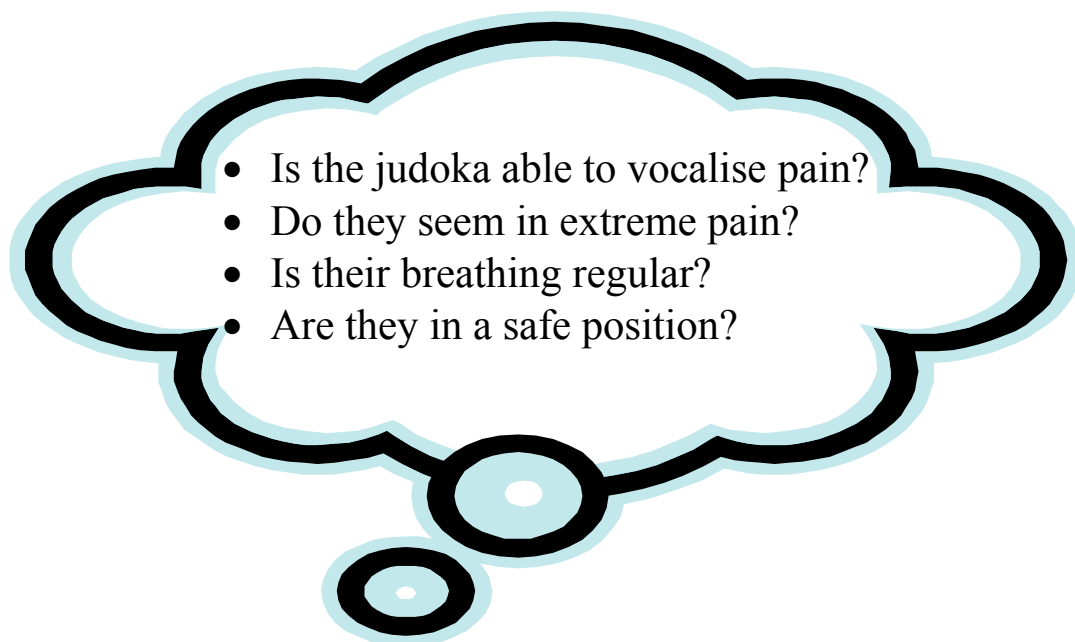
We can reduce the risk of injury by ensuring a thorough warm-up of the body occurs at the beginning of each session, making sure ligaments are gently stretched and contracted prior to active participation of Judo. Warming the body can prevent most common injuries.

Unfortunately, if a judoka does experience an injury, the pain could be immediate or become progressively worse over time – both types of pain require medical attention.

I have devised a 4 point checklist to remind instructors on the mat of the procedures to be followed should a judoka express discomfort;



Assess



Prior to reaching the judoka, the above points should be your thoughts as you begin to communicate and acquire information regarding the pain. Should any of the above raise concern regarding the injured judoka, immediately inform the First Aider and Sensei who will deal with the situation. You may be required to take responsibility for the mat whilst Sensei is occupied.

If the judoka is able to vocalise, breathe properly and not in extreme pain, ask them about the injury. **DO NOT TOUCH A JUDOKA UNLESS ANOTHER SENIOR JUDOKA IS PRESENT.** This precautionary measure is to protect the judoka and yourself. If you were accused of inappropriate touching or action, this could be very damaging to your personal and professional status, therefore always protect yourself and call another senior judoka to witness your action. This may seem an extreme measure, but for the sake of being observed and keeping yourself safe, it is beneficial to all concerned. This action is also good sport practise.

React

Listen to the judoka's identification of pain/injury, if unsure of how to ease the pain, ask for assistance from a qualified First Aider. Even if the injury seems trivial, always be respectful, there may be a hidden reason why the judoka is upset and not feel able to vocalise the real problem.

Respond

Give the judoka time to overcome the pain, ensure regular checking takes place and if required, medical attention given. If medical attention is necessary, ensure Sensei is

aware as he will have to record this action. If a Junior Judoka receives medical attention, consent and awareness of injury must be conveyed to next of kin.

If the same judoka always seems to be injured or sitting on the side, there may be numerous reasons, such as;

- Dislike of uki/tori working with,
- Bullying from other judokas or parents to participate in judo against their will,
- Dislike of physical contact,
- Girls may feel uncomfortable participating during the menstrual cycle,
- Attention seeking,
- Dislike of judo!

These are a few suggestions, it could be anything! Give the judoka time to talk and listen! If the reason is able to be resolved within the dojo, delegate this situation to Senior Instructor and, if considered necessary, Child Protection Officer. If the parent/carer needs to be made aware of the situation, ensure Sensei communicates concern away from the judoka. We may be able to work together.

If a technique is carried through properly, the risk of injury is minimal. Unfortunately, there will still be a risk. There can be varying levels of injury or pain experienced whilst enjoying judo. The severity could range from a pulled muscle through to a broken collar bone. Some common injuries within judo can result from the following;

- Lack of thorough warm-up exercises can put the body at risk of damage;
- The mats must always be pushed together to reduce the risk of catching and possibly breaking toes;
- Breakfalls – unless taught the correct way to fall and supervision takes place, joints, neck and back is prone to injury;
- The back, shoulders and collar bone are at risk when not bending the knees and turning the body when throwing;
- The inability to tap when being strangled can result in unconsciousness;
- Resisting to being thrown can cause injury to back, shoulders and leg muscles/ligaments;
- During groundwork, there is a risk of shoulder and spine locks being experienced;
- Overcrowding whilst practising judo will also increase the risk of injury.

As a Senior Club Instructor, we should be respected by other judokas, but must ensure there is a balance between respect and approachability. We must be non-judgemental, regardless of the reasons given for the injury, and deal with the situation showing the same respect to the judoka as we expect to receive.

Observe

If the injury is genuine, ensure the judoka is observed and assessed for the rest of the session, to identify whether the pain is amplifying or decreasing. Inform next of kin, if necessary. If the judoka seems distressed or unhappy on a regular basis, observe the regularity, inform another Senior Instructor in case you are not able to attend

sessions and communicate your concerns to Sensei or the Child Protection Officer, who will aim to resolve the situation.

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