

Guidelines for Developing Strength

In most sports, development of the various types of strength (maximum strength, speed-strength, strength-endurance) is difficult to achieve through the sport or activity itself. In addition, certain guidelines must be followed to avoid injuries, particularly among children and beginners.

Specific strength-development methods, as well as particular safety measures that must be considered and implemented, are covered in other NCCP workshops. The following considerations are provided for guidance, and they are aimed at young athletes getting started in strength training.

- ❑ In general, exercises involve localized muscle masses. In most of these exercises, the resistance is provided by the body weight of the athlete or by relatively light weights.
- ❑ It is recommended that athletes avoid heavy loads. Ensure that athletes are able to perform at least 12 to 15 consecutive repetitions of each exercise. Under such conditions, strength-endurance becomes the primary ability trained.
- ❑ The speed of execution must be moderate and controlled; athletes must end the exercise when the quality of execution starts to deteriorate.
- ❑ It is possible to use jumping or hopping exercises; the speed of execution and muscle contraction are higher, and these exercises will therefore develop speed-strength (muscle power).
- ❑ Avoid exercises that could excessively overload the spine (compression stress).
- ❑ While developing strength, aim for muscle balance; for instance, develop both the upper- and lower-body muscle groups, the muscles in front and behind body segments, and muscles on both the right and left sides.

