

MEDIA RELEASE

National Education Program Launched To Prevent Injury Increase As Australians Are Encouraged To Exercise

Sydney, 27 February 2003 A recent study published in the *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport* warned that injuries in recreational sports are set to rise as Australians take up more general fitness activities, following the release of the world obesity rankings late last year. In response, Sports Medicine Australia has launched a national education program which aims to show all sporting Australians the benefits of proper preparation before sport and exercise.

Sports injuries cost Australia \$1.65 billion¹ in medical and other health costs and time off work annually.

Sydney Swans captain Stuart Maxfield supports the importance of taping and strapping at all levels of sport; "All professional sportspeople know the importance of taping before a game. Community sports often have high injury levels, but players now have the opportunity to learn the correct method to tape and strap, one of the best ways to reduce injury."

The study also found that more injuries occur during recreational activities than organised sports and recommends extra effort should be directed toward injury prevention in mass participation activities, while monitoring traditional game-based sports².

Launching the Leuko® Strap & Wrap Smart injury prevention clinics in conjunction with Leuko® sports medicine products Mr Gary Moorhead, Chief Executive Officer of Sports Medicine Australia, said the key to preventing injuries was taking time to prepare before playing sport.

"At a time when health issues, and in particular obesity, are at the fore, Australians need to become more active and in so doing, be smart and learn how to prevent injury and recover from it faster. By taking simple precautions, many people can avoid injuries which might otherwise see them on the sidelines".

More evidence of injury prevalence also came to light in the study which found that more people had needed medical treatment of at least one injury sustained in sport or recreation in the preceding 12 months.

It is estimated that between 30-50% of sports injuries could have been prevented³ and that preventative taping can reduce the recurrence of injury by as much as two thirds⁴.

"Taping appropriately to prevent or manage an injury is one way to keep people active. But it has to be done correctly to be effective and most people will need a bit of training on how to do this," Mr Moorhead said.

The Leuko® Strap & Wrap Smart clinics will be held around Australia and include prevention techniques such as warming up, stretching and taping vulnerable parts of the body such as ankles,

¹ Sports Medicine Australia Sports Injury – Proposed National Action Plan. Section 1, page 1. May 2002.

² Journal of Science & Medicine in Sport, Vol 5 Issue 4: WK Mummery, G Schofield, JC Spence; The epidemiology of medically attended sport and recreational injuries in Queensland, p317

³ Leuko Sports Injury Prevention and Management, Section 1, page 3, 1999-2001

⁴ Garrick, JG, "Requa RK: Role of external support in the treatment of ankle sprains", Med.Sci. Sports (3): 200-203, 1993

fingers and thumbs. Managing an injury in order to maximise rehabilitation will also be covered in the program.

The three-hour clinics will be led by Sports Medicine Australia physiotherapists and other health professionals. They are open to all members of the public involved with sport at a community level, from parents, to teachers, coaches and players, or anyone with an interest in protecting themselves from injury.

Leuko Product Manager, Mr Mike Berry said, “Leuko is the preferred supplier of taping and strapping products to many of Australia’s professional sporting teams including the Sydney Swans and St George Dragons. We are pleased to support Sports Medicine Australia in their fine initiative to take the injury prevention message to community sports”.

To provide further assistance to community sports participants, Leuko® has produced a comprehensive booklet which aims to clearly illustrate the methods of taping and strapping. These booklets are available at your local pharmacy.

To register for a Leuko® Strap & Wrap smart clinic, telephone the Sports Medicine Australia office in your region.

NSW: 02 9660 4333 or www.smansw.com.au

VIC: 03 9654 7733

SA: 08 8234 6369

WA: 08 9285 8033

QLD: 07 3870 4195

About Sports Medicine Australia (SMA)

Sports Medicine Australia, through its individual and organisational members, is Australia’s peak advisory body on all medical and health issues for active people – from weekend enthusiasts of all ages through to elite level competition. More information is available at www.sma.org.au

About Leuko®

The Leuko® range of Sports Medicine Products, distributed by BSN Medical has been the continuous choice of SMA training events since the National Sports Trainers Program was launched in 1983, an acknowledgement of the product quality of the Leuko® range. Leuko® products will be used at the Strap & Wrap Smart Injury Prevention workshops. Leuko is proud to support this education campaign to promote injury prevention. For further Leuko® product information please visit www.leukosports.com.au

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