

Physical Misconduct Information Sheet

Physical Misconduct is any behavior done on purpose that causes (or could reasonably cause) physical harm to another person.

Physical Misconduct includes:

- **Contact acts:** punching, beating, slapping, or strangling someone; knowingly letting someone return to play without medical clearance after a serious injury
- **Non-contact acts:** not letting someone have water or food, illegally giving them alcohol or drugs (including prescription medications not prescribed to them), forcing someone to assume a painful stance or position for no athletic purpose
- **Criminal conduct:** any behavior described as physical abuse or misconduct under federal or state law, such as assault or child abuse

Physical Misconduct does not include techniques and behaviors that are professionally accepted in tennis. For example, tennis players may hit the ball hard over the net but cannot intentionally hit their opponent with the ball.

What are examples of Physical Misconduct?

- A tennis provider kicks an athlete in their leg and causes them to fall after the athlete had a poor practice or match
- A tennis provider gives an 11-year-old tennis player someone else's prescription pain medication at a tournament
- An athlete loses their temper and punches an opposing player in the face after a match

Accountability and Safety: A healthier way to respond

- Interactions that involve Physical Misconduct could physically harm or injure someone, even if that was not the intent
- Practices based on accountability focus on respect and discipline, not punishment. This helps athletes associate behaviors with reasonable consequences so they can learn from their mistakes
- Safe practices have recognizable positive effects on athlete performance. Tennis providers know how much and how far to push athletes to maximize results while maintaining safety. They do not let a seriously injured athlete return to play without medical clearance, even if the athlete wants to play through the pain

Scenarios

Caleb and Rohan are playing a doubles match. Caleb falls after colliding with Rohan when they both go for the ball. They end up missing the point.

- **Physical Misconduct:** Rohan gets frustrated, intentionally hits Caleb with his racquet and walks away
- **Accountability and Safety:** Rohan helps Caleb up and the match resumes

Samantha trips during a match, falls, and breaks her ankle.

- **Physical Misconduct:** The official on court refuses to let the athletic trainer examine her ankle and makes her continue with the match, even as her injury noticeably worsens
- **Accountability and Safety:** The official helps her sit down, and then calls an athletic trainer to check out her ankle. When the athletic trainer tells them she should not keep playing, the official and tournament director help her withdraw from the tournament