All the evidence suggests that poor load management is a major risk factor for injury. Load management is NOT always about playing fewer matches or training less frequently. It’s a management system that seeks to get the balance right. Make sure you’re aware of the risk factors!
**Factors in measuring load**

- **Frequency:** sessions per week
- **Volume:** minutes per session
- **Intensity:** rate of perceived exertion (RPE)
- **Individual:** player age, injury profile, etc.
- **Training:** type of workout

**RPE scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RPE</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Max effort</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Extremely hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Very hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Hard</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Somewhat difficult</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Comfortable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Very easy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Resting</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RPE definition**

The Rated Perceived Exertion (RPE) scale measures the perceived intensity level of a physical activity. It is used to estimate how hard a task is and what effort that task requires, from resting to max effort.

**How to monitor load**

- **Spreadsheets**
  - Document volume (minutes) and intensity (RPE)

- **Technology**
  - GPS, accelerometers, radio-frequency devices

- **Analytics**
  - Coding of events, performance analysis
Load variations

Individuation

Mental fatigue

High risk athletes have a lowered tolerance for load and need individualised focus. High risk athletes may be:

- IMMATURE
- VETERANS
- RETURNING FROM INJURY
- IN MULTIPLE TEAMS
- NEW SQUAD MEMBERS
- LACKING TRAINING HISTORY

STRESS

TRAINING STRESS

PERFORMANCE EXPECTATION

POOR SLEEP

EATING HABITS

Indicates high risk
PLAYER LOAD: MANAGE & OPTIMISE

Plan
COMMUNICATION
PROTECTION
INDIVIDUALIZATION

Prepare
REGENERATION / PREP
WARM UP
SMART TRAINING

Perform
FEEL READY
ROBUST AND RESILIENT
MENTALLY ALERT