

## Activate – Injury Prevention Exercise Programme

### What is Activate?

Activate is an evidence-based injury prevention intervention that has been developed following a number of research studies. The training and pre-match exercise programme focuses on balance, strength and agility in order to better prepare players for the physical demands of exercise and aims to mitigate potential injury risks. Each phase includes exercises that have been found to improve movement control and functional conditioning, and pre-activate the muscles in readiness for activity. The specific neck exercises aid activation of stabilising muscles around the head and neck which is thought to reduce the potential “whiplash” effect that can cause concussion.



Activate can be integrated as part of the warm up element of any session before training or matches.

### What research is the programme based on?

Developed by a research team at University of Bath the schoolboy study involved 40 schools and nearly 2,500 players aged 14 – 18, the researchers found that when players completed the exercises three times a week injuries fell overall by 72%, this included concussion injuries which were reduced by 59%. Comparable results were also found in a similar study carried out with adult male players in 40 community clubs.

The articles for both the adult male and schoolboy injury prevention studies have been published in the British Journal of Sports Medicine and are available on the [Activate home page](#).

### How can I find out more?

For more information and to access the free online resources please visit the [Activate](#) webpages on the England Rugby Website.

A free 2 hour practical session has been developed to equip coaches and teachers with the key components of the exercise programme so that they can deliver it as part of their existing rugby and PE sessions. Our research suggests that coaches/teachers who attended the face to face session were more competent and confident in delivering the programme effectively. Therefore it is highly recommended that coaches and teachers attend the face to face session prior to accessing the online resources.



To organise a free face to face session at your club or school please contact your local [RFU Rugby Development Officer or Community Rugby Coach](#).