

To AJKA-International
AJKA-I of PA
Instructor Trainee's Report #29

Subject: Management of Health for Karate Practitioners

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In managing the health of the *karate-ka* the practitioner and the *sensei* must consider a healthy environment, healthy body and a healthy mind.

Healthy Environment

Care should be taken to keep the *dojo* clean and sanitary to prevent introducing and spreading any communicable diseases. It is imperative that the *dojo* is cleaned regularly to destroy bacteria and fungus that can be picked up on hands and feet.

Skin disease transmitted through skin to skin contact. Some forms of infection can also spread through the contact of contaminated mats, equipment and towels. As a general rule of thumb, good personal hygiene and frequent washing of training clothes, mats and equipment may greatly decrease the incidence of skin infections.

The non-training areas such as: bathrooms and changing rooms should be kept sanitary. The facility should be inspected periodically for other health hazards such as electrical, gas, water or fire. Other aspects of the facility must be maintained to keep the training environment healthy. Ventilation of fresh air is important for good aerobic conditioning. The temperature in the training area should be kept cool to prevent the body from overheating or excessive water loss.

Healthy Body

The *sensei* should stress that it is important to take care of one's body and maintain good health. It is ultimately the *karate-ka's* responsibility to take care of themselves. However, if the *karate-ka* is ignoring health problems then the *sensei* must take responsibility and take action. For example, a *karate-ka* may be asked to leave class if he appears too exhausted, disorientated, ill, or injured. To prevent the spread of diseases and promote speedy recuperation an ill *karate-ka* must be asked to stay home.

For best physical health performance nutrition is important. *Karate-kas* should be supplied with information and advise on a good diet and food supplements. The *Sensei* should also be encouraged to educate themselves on common health problems related to sports and their prevention and correction.

The *sensei* should have the means to assess health and condition of a *karate-ka* before they start class. A form asking the new karate practitioner their health history should be required and filled out before joining the class. This will allow the *Sensei* to know whether the people taking their class has: diabetes, asthma, heart conditions or prone to injury.

Healthy Mind

Daily problems and stresses affect physical health and interfere with karate training. *Karate-kas* should be encouraged to leave these problems at the *dojo* door. The *mukuso* or meditation period before and after karate training help prepare a healthy mind and attitude. The instructor should create a training atmosphere that allows a good concentration by eliminating noises and other distractions.

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