**SAFEGUARDING IN MARTIAL ARTS**

**SAFE PRACTICE POLICY**

**Updated 06/05/25**

All Abilities Martial Art

Martial Arts are activities where the safe practice is essential to help prevent injury. Children are particularly vulnerable as they are still developing mentally and physically, so training methods need to be modified as described below.

We have two Risk Assessments in place, one for Juniors after 10 to 16 and one for adults. Our classes are small, we always ensure enough mats are in place for the students to train safely. Students / Parents complete a health questionnaire when they start and are asked to keep the inductors up to date with any changes we also always ask if there are any injuries before and after each class. Before a student joins the club, they have a trial period where we can assess their suitability, as our students’ well-being is always our number one concern.

I have included below our risk assessment for 10–16-year-olds and 16+ year old’s

Activity Risk Assessment for Juniors class aged 10 to 16

As a broad description, this risk assessment covers every task or activity that is a part of any of the classes or seminars hosted by the All Abilities Martial Art. It should accompany other existing policies, procedures and also venue risk assessments.

The risks are based partly on perceived injury and partly on a ten-year audit of accident forms of the All Abilities Martial Art’s predecessor club. The severity of the injury is based upon the perceptions of the All Abilities Martial Art founder, Martin Ridley

All students are made aware of the tapping rule = If you want your partner to STOP, tap on the floor with your hand or feet. Tapping means STOP immediately.

All students are made aware of how to use a score of 1 – 10 when explaining pain with the intention never to go above 4

Risk Assessments

01: Entering and preparing the training area

02: Warm up and cool down

03: Breakfall practice

04: Solo training (stances, striking with the upper limb, striking with the lower limb etc)

05: Pad work

06a: Partnered Set-Techniques: Strikes and defences

06b: Partnered Set-Techniques: Joint Locking

06c: Partnered Set-Techniques: Throwing

07: Weapons defences

08: Sparring Drills and Free Sparring

Likelihood Rating

3 = High (very likely, almost certain to happen again)

2 = Medium (likely, has happened and could happen again)

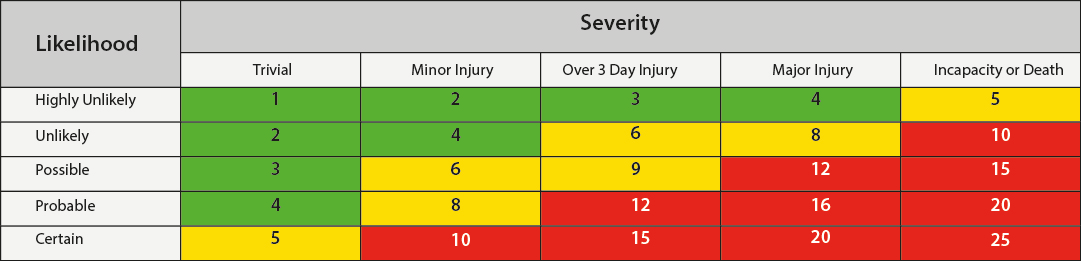
1 = Low (unlikely, probability of occurrence close to zero)

Severity Rating

3 = High (Death, fractures (other than digit), amputation, permanent disability)

2 = Medium (time off work, ambulance being called, A&E attendance, temporary disability (3 or more days off work))

1 = Low (superficial injuries, minor lacerations, contusions, need for first aid



Risk = Likelihood x severity

Prioritising Risk

High = 6-9

Medium = 3-4

Low = 1-2 <https://www.hsdirect.co.uk/free-info/risk-assessment.html>

**Activity:** 01: Entering and preparing the training is

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Cuts to feet from discarded sharp objects | Students and instructors | 2 | 1 | 2 | Adequate lighting | Yes |
| Instructor enters Dojo area first to check the area. If anything is discovered, it is reported to the appropriate person and dealt with in a timely manner, using safe methods and PPE. Only then may students use the venue |
| Students encouraged to use appropriate footwear for use until mats are laid and checked by instructor |
| Tripping over | Any venue user | 2 | 1 | 2 | Make sure there is adequate lighting. The Instructor will enter the building first making sure to turn all lights on and moving any trip hazards | Yes |
| Being hit by wayward mats | Students and instructors | 2 | 1 | 2 | Sensei or nominated members establish a plan for putting the mats down so that students aren’t in each other’s way | Yes |
| Tripping on the mat edge | Any venue user | 2 | 1 | 2 | Clear “training” and “social” areas are maintained, and each person is made clear on whether they should be on or off the mat | Yes |
| Wheelchair user crushing hands on door frames | Student and instructor | 1 | 2 | 2 | The Building has double doors when entering and leaving the venue. The instructor will make sure all double doors are open if we know we have a wheelchair user | Yes |

**Activity:** 02: Warm-up and cool down

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Tripping | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Environment is checked prior to the activity so that all tripping hazards are removed if possible. | Yes |
| Chest pain | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | All new students complete a health questionnaire. In the event of queries as to the safety of the prospective new student will be asked to see their GP. | Yes |
| Soft tissue injury | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Close observation by instructors along with explanation of the activity. We don’t do partner assisted stretching. Student’s age is accounted for, e.g. under 16s don’t do wrist stretches. | Yes |
| Collision of students | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Ensure sufficient training area | Yes |

**Activity:** 03: Breakfall Practice

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Wrist injury | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Shoulder injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Neck injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Collision with other students | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Ensuring adequate space for each student. Mats down. Not rushing the activity | Yes |

**Activity:** 04: Solo training (stances, striking with the upper limb, striking with the lower limb etc)

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury (e.g. hyperextension) | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Kicks start low and increase in height with grade promotion. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially | Yes |
| Falling (off balancing) | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. Make sure all students can break fall | Yes |

**Activity:** 05: Pad work

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury (e.g. hyperextension) | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Kicks start low and increase in height with grade promotion. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially. Students to communicate any pain so that technique can be checked and modified and adapted | Yes |
| Falling (off balancing) | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. Make sure all students can break fall | Yes |
| Impact to hands of pad holding | Student | 1 | 1 | 1 | Check for correct holding of equipment | Yes |

**Activity:** 06a: Partnered Set-Techniques: Strikes and defences

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury, E.G. fingers hyperextended | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially.  Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. | Yes |
| Bruises from students not controlling strikes | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Observation of practice. Explanation of the nature of partner word. Appropriate instructor-to-student ratio | Yes |
| Tripping | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Environment is checked prior to the activity so that all tripping hazards are removed if possible. | Yes |
| Lacerations from finger or toenails | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Students asked to keep nails short | Yes |
| Eye injury from digits | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Techniques to not feature over hands near the face unless in a very controlled and pre-set technique. Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. | Yes |

**Activity:** 06b: Partnered Set-Techniques: Joint locking to a point of slight resistance.

Note: only shown once I trust their ability to judge point of resistance and it has been demonstrated repeatedly. They will apply the technique on an older student over 16 with close supervision or the Instructor to check compliance.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Joint damage due to over-exuberance | Receiving student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Gradual introduction to technique over long period, starting with low-risk techniques. Students all made aware of “tapping” and the philosophy of the dojo. Students not respecting other’s health will be asked to leave. | Yes |

**Activity:** 06c: Partnered Set-Techniques: Throwing

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Shoulder injury from falling | Receiving  student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Mats down. Vetting of student prior to training. Breakfall practice every week. Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex, sacrifice, throws. | Yes |
| Back injury from throwing | Throwing student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Mats down. Vetting of student prior to training. Breakfall practice every week. Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex throws. Making the shape and breaking balance trained before learning to complete the throw | Yes |
| Knee injury from being reaped | Receiving student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex throws. Making the shape and breaking balance trained before learning to complete the throw. Ensuring correct angles used | Yes |

**Activity:** 07: Weapon Defences

Note: NO bladed or hard weapons. Ever

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Head injury from impact | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Depending on activity, foam weapons may be used. Set drills are taught to begin with, working toward free techniques | Yes |
| Eye injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Low level techniques OR eye protection is available | Yes |
| Bruises | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Depending on activity, foam weapons may be used. Set drills are taught to begin with, working toward free techniques | Yes |

**Activity:** 08: Sparring Drills and Free Sparring

Note 1: May include weapons so 07 also applies

Note 2: All other risk assessments except for area preparation also apply. This is in addition

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Head injury from impact by hand | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Contact level is low. Always semi-contact. Student ill be told what the attack is first (less warning as they go up the belt system) | Yes |
| Epistaxis (Nose bleed) from impact by hand | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Contact level is low. Always semi-contact. (less warning as they go up the belt system) | Yes |

**Activity Risk Assessment for Adult class for 16+**

As a broad description, this risk assessment covers every task or activity that is a part of any of the classes or seminars hosted by the All Abilities Martial Art. It should accompany other existing policies, procedures and also venue risk assessments.

The risks are based partly on perceived injury and partly on a ten-year audit of accident forms of the All Abilities Martial Art’s predecessor club. The severity of the injury is based upon the perceptions of the founder of All Abilities Martial Arts, Martin Ridley.

All students are made aware of the tapping rule = If you want your partner to STOP, tap on the floor with your hand or feet. Tapping means STOP immediately.

All students are made aware of how to use a score of 1 – 10 when explaining pain with the intention never to go above 6

Risk Assessments

01: Entering and preparing the training area

02: Warm up and cool down

03: Breakfall practice

04: Solo training (stances, striking with the upper limb, striking with the lower limb etc)

05: Pad work

06a: Partnered Set-Techniques: Strikes and defences

06b: Partnered Set-Techniques: Joint Locking

06c: Partnered Set-Techniques: Chokes and Strangles

06d: Partnered Set-Techniques: Throwing

07: Weapons defences

08: Sparring Drills and Free Sparring

Likelihood Rating

3 = High (very likely, almost certain to happen again)

2 = Medium (likely, has happened and could happen again)

1 = Low (unlikely, probability of occurrence close to zero)

Severity Rating

3 = High (Death, fractures (other than digit), amputation, permanent disability)

2 = Medium (time off work, ambulance being called, A&E attendance, temporary disability (3 or more days off work))

1 = Low (superficial injuries, minor lacerations, contusions, need for first aid)

Risk = Likelihood x severity

Prioritising Risk

High = 6-9

Medium = 3-4

Low = 1-2 <https://www.hsdirect.co.uk/free-info/risk-assessment.html>

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| --- |
| Risk Assessment Table |

**Activity:** 01: Entering and preparing the training area

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Cuts to feet from discarded sharp objects | Students and instructors | 2 | 1 | 2 | Adequate lighting | Yes |
| Instructor enters Dojo area first to check the area. If anything is discovered, it is reported to the appropriate person and dealt with in a timely manner, using safe methods and PPE. Only then may students use the venue |
| Students encouraged to use appropriate footwear for use until mats are laid and checked by instructor |
| Tripping over | Any venue user | 2 | 1 | 2 | Make sure there is adequate lighting. The Instructor will enter the building first making sure to turn all lights on and moving any trip hazards | Yes |
| Being hit by wayward mats | Students and instructors | 2 | 1 | 2 | Sensei or nominated members establish a plan for putting the mats down so that students aren’t in each other’s way | Yes |
| Tripping on the mat edge | Any venue user | 2 | 1 | 2 | Clear “training” and “social” areas are maintained, and each person is made clear on whether they should be on or off the mat | Yes |
| Wheelchair user crushing hands on door frames | Student and instructor | 1 | 2 | 2 | The Building has double doors when entering and leaving the venue. The instructor will make sure all double doors are open if we know we have a wheelchair user | Yes |

**Activity:** 02: Warm-up and cool down

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Tripping | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Environment is checked prior to the activity so that all tripping hazards are removed if possible. | Yes |
| Chest pain | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | All new students complete a health questionnaire. In the event of queries as to the safety of the prospective new student will be asked to see their GP. | Yes |
| Soft tissue injury | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Close observation by instructors along with explanation of the activity. We don’t do partner assisted stretching. Student’s age is accounted for, e.g. under 16s don’t do wrist stretches. | Yes |
| Collision of students | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Ensure sufficient training area | Yes |

**Activity:** 03: Breakfall Practice

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Wrist injury | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Shoulder injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Neck injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Start from low to ground. Height increases along with competence | Yes |
| Collision with other students | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Ensuring adequate space for each student. Mats down. Not rushing the activity | Yes |

**Activity:** 04: Solo training (stances, striking with the upper limb, striking with the lower limb etc)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury (e.g. hyperextension) | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Kicks start low and increase in height with grade promotion. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially | Yes |
| Falling (off balancing) | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. Make sure all students can break fall | Yes |

**Activity:** 05: Padwork

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury (e.g. hyperextension) | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Kicks start low and increase in height with grade promotion. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially. Students to communicate any pain so that technique can be checked and modified and adapted | Yes |
| Falling (off balancing) | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. Make sure all students can break fall | Yes |
| Impact to hands of pad holding | Student | 1 | 1 | 1 | Check for correct holding of equipment | Yes |

**Activity:** 06a: Partnered Techniques: Strikes and defences

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Soft tissue injury, E.G. fingers hyperextended | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Explanation and demonstration. Observation of practice. Technique is broken down to constituent parts initially.  Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. | Yes |
| Bruises from students not controlling strikes | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Observation of practice. Explanation of the nature of partner word. Appropriate instructor-to-student ratio | Yes |
| Tripping | Students | 1 | 1 | 1 | Environment is checked prior to the activity so that all tripping hazards are removed if possible. | Yes |
| Lacerations from finger or toenails | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Students asked to keep nails short | Yes |
| Eye injury from digits | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Techniques to not feature over hands near the face unless in a very controlled and pre-set technique. Higher risk techniques reserved for higher graded students. | Yes |

**Activity:** 06b: Partnered Techniques: Joint locking

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Joint damage due to over-exuberance | Receiving student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Gradual introduction to technique over long period, starting with low-risk techniques. Students all made aware of “tapping” and the philosophy of the dojo. Students not respecting other’s health will be asked to leave. | Yes |

**Activity:** 06c: Partnered Techniques: Chokes and strangles

Note: adults only

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Unconsciousness due to over-exuberance | Receiving student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Students all made aware of “tapping” and the philosophy and roles of the dojo. Students not respecting other’s health will be asked to leave. Chokes and strangles taught at higher level | Yes |

**Activity:** 06d: Partnered Set-Techniques: Throwing

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Shoulder injury from falling | Receiving  student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Mats down. Vetting of student prior to training. Breakfall practice every week. Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex, sacrifice, throws. | Yes |
| Back injury from throwing | Throwing student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Mats down. Vetting of student prior to training. Breakfall practice every week. Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex throws. Making the shape and breaking balance trained before learning to complete the throw | Yes |
| Knee injury from being reaped | Receiving student | 1 | 2 | 2 | Observed practice. Progression through syllabus of simple, well-controlled throws to more complex throws. Making the shape and breaking balance trained before learning to complete the throw. Ensuring correct angles used | Yes |

**Activity:** 07: Weapon Defences

Note: NO bladed weapons. Ever

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Head injury from impact | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Depending on activity, foam weapons may be used. Set drills are taught to begin with, working toward free techniques | Yes |
| Eye injury | Students | 1 | 2 | 2 | Low level techniques OR eye protection is available | Yes |
| Bruises | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Depending on activity, foam weapons may be used. Set drills are taught to begin with, working toward free techniques | Yes |

**Activity:** 08: Sparring Drills and Free Sparring

Note 1: May include weapons so 07 also applies.

Note 2: All other risk assessments except for area preparation also apply. This is in addition.

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Hazard(s) identified | Person(s) at risk | Likelihood | Severity | Risk Rating | Existing Control Measures | Do controls reduce risk to acceptable levels? |
| Head injury from impact by hand or foot | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Contact level is low. Always semi-contact. | Yes |
| Epistaxis from impact by hand or foot | Students | 2 | 1 | 2 | Contact level is low. Always semi-contact. | Yes |