

MCMAP Injuries on the Rise



The Marine Corps Martial Arts Program (MCMAP) builds Marines with the mental and physical toughness and discipline required to be successful in close-quarters combat. MCMAP is unique because its universal skill set is taught to and executed by all Marines, from basic training to combat missions.

The downside is that as Marines sharpen their martial-art skills, some get injured during MCMAP training. In FY09 compared to FY08, MCMAP training injuries increased 62%.

The 159 reported injuries caused 785 lost days and 3,415 light/limited duty days. The top three injured body parts were shoulders (31), knees (20), and ankles (18).

This combination of injuries, lost time, and LIMDU, along with the on-going problem of under-reporting, is an area of concern for Marine Corps leaders. As with all mishaps, accurate reporting is essential if we are going to fully understand the extent of the problem, assess the causes, and develop mishap-prevention strategies.

Leadership and MCMAP Instructors must review the Marine Corps Order covering the implementation and execution of MCMAP training. Block training isn't recommended, because it has the potential to increase injuries due to its compressed nature. MCMAP training sessions should not exceed the prescribed limit of two hours. When conducting body sparring or free sparring, make sure the Marines wear protective equipment. When conducting throws and practicing falls, use a soft surface free of obstacles.

The Martial Arts Center of Excellence (MACE) web site <http://www.tecom.usmc.mil/mace/> is an excellent resource for MCMAP training techniques, methods to reduce injuries and program management.