

BODY COMPOSITION ASSESSMENT CONSIDERATIONS

Table 1 summarises considerations when body composition assessments are undertaken.

Issue	Comments
Assessment Method	Consideration should be given to the suitability and availability of different techniques
Assessment frequency	Protocols need to consider the precision and reliability of the technique in comparison to the likely change in body composition of the athlete ISAK guidelines recommend that anthropometric assessments (e.g. “skinfolds”) are not undertaken less than 6 weeks apart ANZBMS guidelines typically recommend that there should be at least 2-3 months between DEXA assessments of body composition It is preferable to manage the timing of assessments so that they are all being undertaken by same person.
Assessment safety	DEXA scans involve exposure to a small radiation dose (see ‘Guidelines for the Use of Dual-Energy X-Ray Absorptiometry (DEXA) in Australian Cricket’)
Language	Respectful language should be used when speaking with and about players, their bodies and body composition change.
Location & environment	Adequate privacy should be provided to the player during assessment. Assessment should occur in a designated room rather than in an open space. If the practitioner is communicating results to a recorder, they should not be able to be overheard by others. The coach should not be involved in the body composition assessment process.
Assessment scheduling	Although it is tempting to schedule a body composition assessment with an efficient and rapid timetable, it is important to build enough time into each assessment to address any concerns of the individual player.
Data Storage	The data should be treated as sensitive medical information and stored in the AMS.
Pre assessment education	Prior to a new type of assessment, the player should be supported with education regarding the rationale for the testing, the protocol itself, and how results will be used and stored. Group education may be appropriate but should allow time for players to discuss their concerns individually. This education should not be scheduled on the same day as testing. The AIS “What to Expect During Your Anthropometry Assessment” video (Appendix 7) should be viewed before undertaking anthropometry for the first time.
Communication of results (to the player)	Careful decisions should be made about the timing of the communication of the results (e.g. at the point of collection or at a specific consultation), and the personnel involved in the communication. Results should be discussed confidentially and separately with each player, rather than in a player group forum or posted in a common space. Players should be encouraged not to share their results with other players.