



Mako Paddle Club — Health & Fitness to Participate

October 2025

It's time for an adult discussion about health, fitness, and our individual responsibility to be honest about our ability to paddle.

Did you know? Each season, when you renew your DBNSW and Mako membership, you are making a declaration - *that you are fit to participate in dragon boating*. While we tick the box to register our membership, we don't always adopt that responsibility when we are training and racing.

At Mako, we want to build on that idea with a simple reminder: **taking care of yourself is one of the best ways to look after your team**. When you're healthy, fit, and ready to paddle, everyone in the boat benefits.

FOMO, Honesty, and Team Spirit

We know it's tough to miss a paddle. When the crew is on the water and the energy's high, **FOMO hits hard** — no one wants to feel left out. But saying nothing and pushing through when you have an injury or are ill doesn't just put *you* at risk; the whole boat will likely be the recipient of your decision to say nothing.

It is easy to stay quiet and hope no one notices, but silence can hurt the team more than you think. Being upfront about how you're feeling isn't weakness — it's a sign of strength, maturity, and respect for your teammates. Sometimes the best thing you can do for the team is to step back, recover properly, and come back stronger.

This is not a conversation the coaches or captains should have to start. They can already see if you are ill or if your technique is off through injury. Please respect them and your teammates by owning your decision to sit out training or racing. As adults, we each have a responsibility to own our decisions, and it's unfair to expect someone else to make them for us.

Remember: we're all in this together. Every stroke relies on every paddler doing the right thing — including speaking up and sitting out when something's not right.

AUSDBF Annual Health Check — A Smart Step for Your Safety

While not mandatory, **AUSDBF strongly recommends that all paddlers complete the Annual Health Check** each season. It's a simple, quick check-up that helps you reflect on your fitness to paddle, identify any health concerns early, and make sure you're participating safely — for your sake and for your crew's.



Taking a few minutes to complete the form and attending a quick annual GP check-up are among the easiest ways to support your own wellbeing and the team's performance. You can find the current AUSDBF Health Check form here:

 [AUSDBF Annual Health Check \(PDF\)](#)

And for more information on Membership & Fitness to Participate, and the Annual Health Check, visit [Mako Admin](#)

Final Thoughts

- Take the time to check in with your body and listen to what it's telling you.
- Don't ignore niggles or illnesses — minor issues can become major ones if left unchecked.
- Open conversations with your coach or captain keep everyone safe and strong.

When we each take responsibility for our health, we make the whole crew stronger. That's the heart of Mako Mojo — showing up for ourselves and for each other.

See you on the water — healthy and ready to rampage!

Mako Committee