



MAJOR MULTISPORT GAMES | CANADA SUMMER GAMES 2022

AUGUST 6-21, 2022 | NIAGARA REGION | ONTARIO

Let the Games Begin!

The Canada Games are the largest multisport games for youth athletes in Canada. From August 6-21, 2022 the Niagara Region will host the pandemic-delayed Canada Summer Games, which will feature more than 5,000 participants (including athletes, coaches and staff) competing in 18 different sports across 18 venues located around the beautiful Niagara Region.



For most athletes, The Canada Games will be the biggest and most exciting sporting event in which they have ever competed. For some, it will be a gateway for a long and successful career in competitive sports. For others, it will be an event that leads into their next stage as varsity athletes. For some participants, it will be the highest point of their athletic careers.

Representing their provinces and competing at the Canada Games is a great honor and privilege for athletes, but it can also create significant pressure and stress.



Common pressures experienced by athletes in this setting include:

1. Worry about disappointing coaches
2. Worry about disappointing family
3. Pressure to perform well for scouting/future coaches
4. Worry about embarrassing themselves
5. Anxiety being watched by big crowds
6. Disappointment about losses or poor performances



Make your once-in-a-lifetime Canada Games experience into an incredible memory- savour every part of it, including time outside of the competition

Getting Ready

The bigger the sporting event, the bigger the distractions! There will be many things that will pull your attention in different directions, including:

- The celebrations! There will be many celebrations, and they are all well deserved. Be sure to enjoy those moments, but then put them aside when it is time to focus on practice and competitions. Mind Mastery tricks below!
- The crowd! There will be thousands of spectators enjoying the Games. It will be important to keep your mind focused on the task at hand: wear your "field* vision filter" when in practice and competition (*note- substitute "court", "lane", or whatever term is appropriate for your sport!)
- The scouts! Coaches will be in the stands scouting for their next recruits. Remember that you have earned your place at the Canada Games because you have already proven your skills, dedication and tenacity. Be steady and trust what got you there! Trying too hard may actually interfere with your performance. Trust your training.
- Negative thoughts! The ultimate evil-doers! Helpful thoughts are positive and constructive- highlighting what you *intend* to do, and what you *can* do. Eliminate the "shoulds", "can't"s, and negative name calling. They will get in your way.

The Canada Games are a great place to showcase physical, mental, and leadership skills. No one is bigger than the team. Support a teammate if they are struggling, and remind them that they deserve to be there and are important. Accept support from your teammates. You're all in this together!

Recognize and limit your distractions. Excuse yourself for some quiet time if you need to. Direct your teammate to staff if you feel they need more support.

"Mind Mastery": tap or hold an object to "store" your distracting thoughts before stepping into practice or your game. This can be as simple as touching the doorframe, chair or wall- your distracting thoughts will stay there until you are finished

"Field* Filter": Use your pre-warm up time to *zone* in your focus to the field*. While you are warming up, practicing or competing, nothing outside of your "field* vision" interrupts your focus. You can turn off the filter after the event ends.



Trust yourself, your accomplishments, and the fact that you have earned your way to the Canada Games. YOU have accomplished this. Believe that, believe in yourself, and trust that you have the skills to perform well. The more positive and relaxed you can be; the more positive and focused your self talk is, and the more you believe in yourself- will all set you up for success.



There will be mental health supports at the Canada Games Polyclinic. If you would like more tips on what to expect and how to optimally perform at the Canada Games, contact cedwards@synergysportmentalhealth.ca