



Five Tips to Prevent Summer Sports Injuries



Summertime means the kids are out of school, and we are all spending a lot more time outdoors. Seasonally, summer often results in a higher number of injuries and trips to the emergency room.

In fact, according to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, nearly 2 million people suffer sports-related injuries each year, and are seen in the ER to the tune of \$2,294 per sprain and \$7,666 per fracture.

It's not just injuries that land people in the doctor's office. Common things this season are chronic overuse injuries, plantar fasciitis, tendonitis and stress fractures, along with pulled muscles. Here are 5 ways to stay in shape and stay healthy through the summer months.

- 1. Stay hydrated.** Dehydrated muscles won't work as efficiently so it is easier to strain, cramp or pull. A general rule of thumb is to drink eight 8-ounce glasses of water per day. If you are working out more than 45 minutes to an hour, you should also consider adding in a low-sugar sports drink with electrolyte replacement.
- 2. Take a warm up lesson.** Too many people try to do too much at once and end up with an overuse injury. Make sure you are training slowly, building your body and muscles up over time. If you aren't sure, consult an expert to work out a fitness plan that's right for your body and fitness level.
- 3. Prepare your muscles.** One of the best ways to prevent injury is to build the target muscles for the sport or activity that you're involved with. This goes hand in hand with making sure that you're properly warming up, and not doing too much too soon.
- 4. Get the proper equipment.** One of the easier ways to prevent sports injuries is to wear the proper shoes. Make sure you are playing the sport a specific shoe is meant for, and on the surface it's meant for. For example, running in tennis court shoes is a big mistake that can lead to injury. Also, make sure you have shoes with good arch support and firm heel support.
- 5. Know the signs of a concussion.** If you or your children are playing a contact sport it is important to know the signs of a concussion. In adults these include; nausea, persistent headaches or neck pain, difficulty concentrating, feeling tired all of the time, and dizziness. In children, the symptoms can range from tiredness and irritability to changes in eating habits and sleep patterns, as well as a loss of balance and vomiting.

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