

Youth Sport Injury Prevention

What Leads to Injury?

- **Overspecialization**
 - Your body develops to reflect the stresses it is exposed to.
 - Specialization in one area can leave other areas exposed to risk of injury.
- **Overtraining**
 - Increasing intensity, frequency, or duration too rapidly
 - Lack of variability of training
 - Lack of appropriate rest
 - "No pain, no gain" mentality
- **Poor Preparation**
 - Absent or inadequate warm up and cool down
 - Improper and/or ill-fitting gear
- **Improper Technique**
 - Insufficient practice or training for safe movement patterns
 - Coordination and complex motor skills are not fully mature until 10-12 years of age.
 - General fitness skills developed through exposure to various physical activities should be the focus in younger children.

Tips to Prevent Injury

- **Age Appropriate Training**
 - General fitness skills such as running, swimming, jumping, throwing, catching, and hitting should be the focus of younger children (under 12)
 - Older teens and children who are beginning sport specific training should incorporate cross training to break up the routine and reduce risk of overuse injuries
- **Dynamic Warm Ups**
 - Incorporate doing exercises in more than one direction, diagonals, rotation, etc.
 - Save static stretching for after the activity
- **Adequate Rest - The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends:**
 - At least 1 day off per week
 - At least 1 month off of sport specific training per year
- **Increase Difficulty at an Appropriate Pace**
 - 10% rule: increase intensity no more than 10% per week
 - Allows adequate time for recovery and response
- **Other tips:**
 - Use appropriate gear
 - Eat healthy and hydrate well - if you're thirsty you waited too long!
 - Seek advice of a health professional for pain that does not subside with prolonged rest
 - Play safe - follow sport specific rules and regulations

Other Helpful Resources

- Stopsportsinjuries.org
- Safekids.org
- AAP.org
- Orthoinfo.aaos.org