

Prevent Sport Related Injuries

with these tips:

Sleep Hygiene: Sleep has a major impact on pain and recovery! To ensure a good night's rest try:

- Turn lights, TV, cellphone, and computer off one hour prior to bed time.
- No checking social media or e-mails before bed.
- Keep your bedroom dark and cool.
- In the hour before sleep: relax, breath, stretch, meditate, or read.
- Have a set wakeup time.
- Keep caffeine to a minimum, especially in the afternoons and evenings.
- Medicine should be taken per your doctor's advice

Nutrition: Maintaining proper nutrition and hydration is also an important part of staying at peak performance.

- Meals eaten before exercise should be consumed 3-4 hours prior, and should be higher in carbohydrates and protein.
- After exercise, consume a carbohydrate and protein based snack within 30 minutes in order to replenish glycogen stores and aid in muscle repair and growth.
- Athletes should consume at least 16 oz. of fluids 2 hours prior to exercise, and 5-10 oz. during exercise every 15-20 minutes.
- Drink 3 cups of fluids per pound lost during each bout of exercise.

Rest & Active Recovery: Rest is a critical component in order to prevent repetitive or overuse injuries. However, rest days should be more than just sitting on the couch. Active recovery exercises should be incorporated into your rest days to help restore optimal balance to your muscles.

- Use a foam roller or "The Stick" for self-myofascial release to tight or sore areas. By slowly massaging over targeted muscles you are providing deep pressure, which can:
 - o Elongate and relax local muscle fibers
 - o Break down fibrous scar tissues that have built up in injured or tight muscles
 - o Increase localized blood flow to help rid toxins or metabolites from the area.
- Participate in stretching and joint mobility exercises to ensure joints can achieve a full range of motion.
- Improve balance and core stability.
- Limit the amount of time spent sitting while watching TV, playing video games, or surfing the internet. Sitting for prolonged periods of time can alter muscle firing patterns, decrease circulation, and increase hip flexor tightness.
- Remember... Train smarter, not harder. The key to successful training is balance between strength, flexibility, and the biomechanics of your sport's movement patterns.

Warm Up: One of the easiest ways to prevent muscle injuries is to perform a dynamic warm up before exercise!

- Start slow and easy with walking, light jogging, or biking for 5-10 minutes to prepare the body.
- By increasing the heart rate and blood flow, muscles become more elastic and ready to be stretched.
- Follow with dynamic stretching by taking the body through a functional range of motion. Some examples include:
 - o Skipping, walking lunges, high knees, seat kickers, side shuffling, carioca, and running.

Cool Down: Do not forget to cool down after a round of exercise or practice.

- A minimum of 10 minutes of cool down exercises will help reduce muscle soreness and improve recovery.
- Perform a low-intensity cardiovascular activity, like light jogging or brisk treadmill walking.
- Follow with static stretching or foam rolling to the major muscle groups.
- A cool down will help remove the waste products that have built up in the muscles from intense usage during practice or games.