



Workplace Wellness

Spring INTO ACTION

Workplace Wellness Challenge

Week 2 – Injury Prevention



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Injury Prevention

Anyone who exercises is at risk for injury and should follow these injury prevention tips:

Children

Preventing injuries in children is a team effort, requiring the support of parents, coaches and kids.

What parents and coaches can do:

- Try to group children according to skill level and size, not by chronological age, particularly during contact sports. If this is not practical, modify the sport to accommodate children with varying skill levels.
- Match the child to the sport, and don't push the child too hard into an activity that he or she may not like or be physically capable of doing.
- See that all children get a pre-season physical exam.
- Don't let (or insist that) a child play when injured. No child (or adult) should ever be allowed to work through the pain.
- Get the child medical attention, if needed. A child who develops any symptom that persists or that affects athletic performance should be examined by a health care professional. Other clues that a child needs to see a health professional include the inability to play following a sudden injury, visible abnormality of the arms and legs, and severe pain that prevents the use of an arm or leg.
- Provide a safe environment for sports. A poor playing field, unsafe gym sets or insecure soccer goals can cause serious injury to children.

What children can do:

- Be in proper condition to play the sport.
- Follow the rules of the game.
- Wear appropriate protective gear.
- Know how to use athletic equipment.
- Avoid playing when very tired or in pain.
- Make warm-ups and cooldowns part of your routine. Warm-up exercises, such as stretching or light jogging, can help minimize the chances of muscle strain or other soft tissue injury. They also make the body's tissues warmer and more flexible. Cooldown exercises loosen the muscles that have tightened during exercise.



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Adults

To prevent injuries, adult athletes should take the following precautions:

- Don't be a "weekend warrior," packing a week's worth of activity into a day or two. Try to maintain a moderate level of activity throughout the week.
- Learn to do your sport right. Using proper form can reduce your risk of "overuse" injuries such as tendinitis and stress fractures.
- Remember safety gear. Depending on the sport, this may mean knee or wrist pads or a helmet.
- Accept your body's limits. You may not be able to perform at the same level you did 10 or 20 years ago. Modify activities as necessary.
- Increase your exercise level gradually.
- Strive for a total body workout of cardiovascular, strength training and flexibility exercises. Cross-training reduces injury while promoting total fitness.

Tips for Preventing Injury

- Avoid bending knees past 90 degrees when doing half knee bends.
- Avoid twisting knees by keeping feet as flat as possible during stretches.
- When jumping, land with your knees bent.
- Do warm-up exercises not just before vigorous activities like running, but also before less vigorous ones such as golf.
- Don't overdo it.
- Do warm-up stretches before activity. Stretch the Achilles tendon, hamstring and quadriceps areas and hold the positions. Don't bounce.
- Cool down following vigorous sports. For example, after a race, walk or walk/jog for five minutes so your pulse comes down gradually.
- Wear properly fitting shoes that provide shock absorption and stability.
- Use the softest exercise surface available, and avoid running on hard surfaces like asphalt and concrete. Run on flat surfaces. Running uphill may increase the stress on the Achilles tendon and the leg itself.

