



Being a Good Sport

IT'S ALL FUN AND GAMES UNTIL SOMEONE GETS HURT

Whether one is a daily jogger, weekend sports leaguer, or occasional golfer, there is a chance of injury to muscles, ligaments, tendons, or joints. Fortunately, the sports medicine team at SUN Orthopaedics of Evangelical is ready to diagnose and treat a host of problems that can crop up in active individuals.

COMMON SPORTS INJURIES

A sprain refers to a stretch or tear in a ligament or joint capsule, while a strain is a pulling, twisting, or overextension of a muscle or tendon. When a health professional describes a problem such as “tendinitis” or “bursitis,” the suffix “-itis” indicates that a body part is inflamed or swollen.

LOWER EXTREMITIES

- **Ankle sprain**—results from torn lateral ligaments of the ankle;

common in sports with rapid directional change.

- **Sprains of ligaments of the knee**—anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) or lateral collateral ligament (LCL); stretching or tearing the ACL can occur after a sudden

change in direction, while a blow to the outside of the knee frequently causes damage to the medial collateral ligament (MCL).

- **Torn knee cartilage**—the meniscus is a thick pad of cartilage that acts as a shock absorber between the thigh and shin bones; a torn meniscus often happens in contact sports, but can happen to anyone.

FIRST AID FOR SPORTS INJURIES

If you sustain an injury while exercising, follow these steps to help minimize pain—and prevent further injury—until you can see a medical professional.

- **Rest**—Stop or limit sports or any activities that aggravate the injury site.

- **Ice**—An ice pack will help limit swelling and the chill can lessen the perception of pain.
- **Compression**—Use wraps such as elastic bandages, splints, or air casts to immobilize

the damaged tissues and keep swelling to a minimum.

- **Elevation**—Use a pillow to support the affected limb above the level of the heart, if possible, to reduce swelling.



GET MOVING AGAIN

Call SUN Orthopaedics of Evangelical at 1-800-598-5096.



Subluxation of the shoulder

Rotator cuff strain

Tennis elbow

Wrist sprain

Sprains of ligaments of the knee

Torn knee cartilage

Ankle sprain

UPPER EXTREMITIES

- **Wrist sprain**—most frequently caused by an unexpected fall.
- **Tennis elbow**—inflammation of the tendon on the outside of the elbow due to repetitive flexing and bending of the wrist; causes burning pain and weak grip strength.
- **Rotator cuff strain**—inflammation of the muscles and tendons of the front or back of the shoulder; often an overuse injury in sports with repetitive overhead arm movements.
- **Subluxation of the shoulder**—Also known as shoulder instability, this overuse injury is caused by repeated stretching and tearing of the shoulder ligaments, which results in looseness and allows the top of the arm bone to slip out of place (although it is not a full shoulder dislocation).

Fractures or breaks can occur in just about any bone. Usually there will be significant pain and the affected limb may look misaligned. Bone breaks are a medical emergency and require a visit to the emergency department for X-rays, diagnosis, and immobilization, with follow-up care by an orthopaedist.

TREATMENTS

Depending on the severity of an injury, sports medicine professionals have many treatments to offer. The patient may be given a course of exercises or braces that can be managed at home. Medications for pain relief can include over-the-counter analgesics or prescription painkillers. Soft-tissue inflammation that does not respond to oral anti-inflammatories might require steroid injections.

More serious or prolonged problems might call for surgical procedures. These can range from arthroscopic surgery—a minimally invasive procedure to repair damaged tissues around a joint, which has a high success rate and short recovery period—to open surgery for more complex issues.