

How to Prevent Sports Injuries

<http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa101801a.htm>

Your Guide to Sports Medicine

From Elizabeth Quinn,

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Tips you can use to stay safe whatever sport you play

Following are some general rules for injury prevention no matter what sport you play. While it is impossible to prevent every injury, research suggests that injury rates could be reduced by 25% if athletes took appropriate preventative action, including:

1. Be in proper physical condition to play a sport.
Keep in mind the weekend warrior has a high rate of injury. If you play any sports, you should adequately train for that sport. It is a mistake to expect the sport itself to get you into shape.

Following a regular conditioning program of exercises designed specifically for your sport can prevent many injuries. (See: Proper conditioning <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/?once=true&>)

2. Know and abide by the rules of the sport.
The rules are designed, in part, to keep things safe. This is extremely important for anyone who participates in a contact sport. Rules of conduct, including illegal blocks and tackles are enforced to keep athletes healthy. Know them. Follow them.

3. Wear appropriate protective gear and equipment.
Protective pads, mouth guards, helmets, gloves and other equipment is not for sissies. Protective equipment that fits you well can save your knees, hands, teeth, eyes, and head. Never play without your safety gear.

4. Rest.
Athletes with high consecutive days of training, have more injuries. While many athletes think the more they train, the better they'll play, this is a misconception. Rest is a critical component of proper training. Rest can make you stronger and prevent injuries of overuse, fatigue and poor judgment. (See: Overtraining

<http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/?once=true&>

5. Always warm up before playing.
Warm muscles are less susceptible to injuries. The proper warm up is essential for injury prevention. Make sure your warm up suits your sport. You may simply start your sport slowly, or practice specific stretching or mental rehearsal depending upon your activity. (See: The warm up <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa071003a.htm>)

6. Avoid playing when very tired or in pain.
This is a set-up for a careless injury. Pain indicates a problem. You need to pay attention to warning signs your body provides. (See: Six Sports Injury Warning Signs <http://sportsmedicine.about.com/cs/injuryprevention/a/aa101801a.htm>)

Research provides us with helpful clues about the cause of sports injury. There are two factors that outweigh the rest when it comes to predicting a sports injury. They are:

- Having a history of injury. Previous injuries to a muscle, or joint tend to develop into chronic problem areas for many athletes. It is extremely important to warm up, and stretch previously injured parts.
- A high number of consecutive days of training. Recovery days reduce injury rates by giving muscles and connective tissues an opportunity to repair between training sessions

Reference

American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons Public Information

Web: <http://www.aaos.org/wordhtml/home2.htm>