EDUCATION ON CALL

Overuse Injuries

Whether they're playing organized sports or just a simple game of tag, kids can sometimes overdo it. That's why it's important for you to know how to prevent, identify, and treat common overuse injuries. Always talk to your child's doctor if you have any questions or concerns.

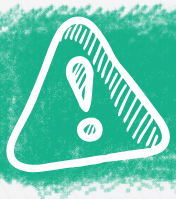
Understand overuse injuries

Children who specialize in sports at a young age often exert intense, excessive levels of activity over a short time. This places stress on growing bones, which are more vulnerable to injury than mature bones. Overuse injury occurs when bones, muscles, ligaments, and tendons are repetitively stressed without being given time to heal.

Know the signs

Common symptoms of overuse

- Being unable to put weight on a certain body part
- Favoring one side of the body
- Feeling dizzy or lightheaded
- Feeling pain when using a body part
- Having trouble breathing during activity
- Having severe joint or muscle stiffness
- Being unable to sit and/or climb stairs
- Losing feeling in fingers or toes
- Experiencing unusual weakness



Strains—or injuries to a muscle or tendon as a result of the muscle being over stretched or torn—are one of the most common overuse injuries. They differ from a sprain, which is a ligament stretch or tear that is usually the result of a fall or hit.

Help prevent future injuries

1. **Prepare for the season:** Schedule a pre-participation physical examination for your child 4-6 weeks before the season starts.
2. **Play for fun:** Keep sports enjoyable and age-appropriate, and focus on your child's overall wellness. Taking part in a variety of structured and unstructured activities leads to greater skill and muscle development.
3. **Practice moderation:** Limit participation to 5 days a week and one sport per season. At a minimum, children should rest at least 1 day each week and a combined 2-3 months per year.

Treat with The R.I.C.E. Method

Rest *your child from their regular activities and have them keep weight off the injury*

Ice *the injured area for 20 minutes, 4-8 times daily*

Compress *the injured area with an elastic wrap, boot, or splint to reduce swelling*

Elevate *the injured area above the heart to further reduce swelling*

For aches, pain, and fever, **TYLENOL**® and **MOTRIN**® are

Always On Call

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