

Injury Prevention

The following information can be found when clicking the “Injury Prevention” tab

Reducing the Risk of an Injury

Take TIME OFF: Plan to take at least ONE day off per week from training to allow your body to rest and recover.

Wear the CORRECT Gear: Players should wear appropriate and properly fitted protective equipment such as pads (neck, shoulder, elbow, chest, knee, shin), helmets, mouthpieces, face guards, protective cups, and/or eye wear. Required equipment varies based on each sport. Parents and athletes should not assume that protective gear will prevent all injuries, especially in high collision sports, such as football.

Strengthen: Conditioning and strengthening exercises help build up the muscles used in play. The stronger you are, the better your muscles are at protecting your body from injury.

Increase flexibility: Stretching before and after practices and games can increase flexibility and gives the body a proper cool down after activity. Extremely tight muscles could lead to injuries such as strains and sprains. Stretching should also be incorporated into a daily fitness plan.

Use the PROPER Technique: This should be reinforced during the playing season. For example, football athletes should avoid tackling with their head down, which puts the athlete at high risk for a spinal injury.

Take Breaks: Rest periods during practices and games can reduce injuries and prevent heat illness or over exertion. This includes getting an adequate amount of sleep which is 8-10 hours for adolescents and adults.

Play SAFE: Strict rules against headfirst sliding (baseball and softball), and spearing (football), and checking in hockey should be enforced. Stop the activity if there is pain.

AVOID Heat Injury: Drink **PLENTY** of fluids before, during, and after exercise or play. Athletes should drink at least two to three bottles of water before practices and games. Consuming both water and a sports drink during participation also helps maintain proper hydration. Coaches should limit or stop practices/competitions during extreme heat/humidity periods. Athletes should wear light clothing during conditioning in high temperatures.