

Spring Sports Injuries

Common spring injuries include ankle sprains, groin pulls, hamstring strains, shin splints, knee injuries, and Little League elbow or tennis elbow. Injuries usually occur due to lack of conditioning the muscles and joints, and many of these injuries are preventable.



STRAINS AND SPRAINS

Overuse injuries such as tennis elbow, are common spring sports injuries. One of the symptoms of overuse is a weakening of the joint. When this occurs, we become prone to more serious injuries beyond just soreness. The weakened joint, tendons and muscle structure, is more susceptible to strains and sprains. Sufficient rest between games, matches and even training sessions, is critical.



Concussions – While not as prevalent in non-contact sports, concussions still occur. For instance, baseball and softball players can be involved in collisions.

Bone bruise and contusions – Baseball and softball players are prone to these types of injuries. Collisions can cause bone and muscle injuries, even fractures, but being struck by the ball is a more common event.

Back injuries – Events like high jumping and pole vaulting are track and field events where back injuries occur. Baseball and softball hitters can also injure their backs from the sheer force exerted by swinging at a pitch. While not as common as some injuries, spring athletes should still be aware of and try to prevent back injuries.



Sport Injuries in Numbers

FACTS:

- 65% of sports injury cases involve people aged **5 – 24**
- 39% of sports injury patients are female and **61% are male**
- 28% of sports injury cases resulted from **falls**

Most common sports injuries:

- 41.4% are strains and **sprains**
- 20% are **fractures**
- 19% are **cuts and bruises**

Sports that cause the most injuries:

- 6.3% from soccer
- 7.2% from cycling
- 8.3% from football
- 9.9% from basketball
- 16.3% from general exercise (running, etc.)
- 52% from others



Tips to Prevent Kids' Spring Sports Injuries

Wellness checkup: Having a medical evaluation in advance of the start of a season can help identify possible health concerns that have the potential to lead to injury.

Ask your child's coach to gradually increase their playing time during practice and to avoid pushing them full throttle. It is important that your child's feet and ankles become accustomed to the level of activity required for the sport they are entering.

Insist on open communication if your child has pain. Express to your child athlete that s/he should inform you and the coach of any pain or discomfort as soon as it occurs.

Overuse injuries can be subtle and develop overtime, such as Achilles tendonitis and shin splints. The sooner an injury can be detected, the sooner it can be treated.

If an injury occurs, remember **RICE**. Often, an injured foot or ankle can be healed with rest, ice, compression and elevation (RICE). If your child complains of foot or ankle pain, s/he should take a break from playing and allow time for recovery. Consult a foot and ankle surgeon for a complete evaluation.

