



SPORTS INJURIES IN AUSTRALIA

AN OVERVIEW

Dear Patient,

Welcome to our newsletter and thanks for coming to see us for your physio needs.

Your ongoing health is very important to all of us here at the clinic. We hope that this newsletter will help keep you up to date with information about physio-related health matters that may be of interest to you and people you know. We hope you enjoy it!

If you have any queries, please call us. If you, or someone you know, have a physio related problem, please call us. We would be more than happy to help you out in any way we can.

Please feel free to pass this newsletter on to your family and friends.

With kind regards

The Physiotherapists and Staff at
PHYSICA SPINAL & PHYSIOTHERAPY CLINIC

PHYSIOTHERAPISTS

The physiotherapists working at this clinic are:-

Warwick James

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Gregory Collis-Brown

B. App Sc (Phy)
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Chris Tubb

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Ba Ex Sci, Grad Dip Ex Rehab
Exercise Physiologist

Kate Walters

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Sports Medicine Australia recently published a report on sporting injuries in Australia. It is estimated that every year nearly one million Australians are injured playing sport or undertaking recreation activity. To those involved in sport, the information in this report offers very interesting reading. Here are some highlights of points contained in the report:-



The 5 most popular sports and activities for those aged over 15 years:-

- ❖ Walking
- ❖ Aerobics
- ❖ Swimming
- ❖ Cycling
- ❖ Golf

For those 5-14 years of age, the most common sports and activities are:-

- ❖ Swimming
- ❖ Soccer
- ❖ Netball
- ❖ Aussie rules football
- ❖ Tennis

The 5 most commonly injured body parts are:-

- ❖ The hand and fingers
- ❖ Ankle
- ❖ Wrists
- ❖ Knees
- ❖ Shoulders

The 5 most injury prone sports are:-

- ❖ Aussie rules football
- ❖ Basketball
- ❖ Soccer
- ❖ Netball
- ❖ Cricket



Some of the comments coming from the reports are :-

- One in 17 Australians suffers a sporting injury each year
- Sports injury rates are lower among females
- Injuries to the lower leg are more than twice as frequent as those to the upper body
- An injury sustained in the previous season increases the risk of injury a further 45%
- It is estimated that up to 50% of sports injuries are preventable

Sports injuries can cause a lot of angst and can affect one's ability to enjoy life fully. Physiotherapists are experts in assessing and treating sports injuries and can help get you back on the track as quickly as possible.

The report can be found at:- www.smartplay.com.au

QUOTE

"In order to change we must be sick and tired of being sick and tired"

this issue

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Warming up and cooling down for sport

Why warm up?

Warming up will increase your body temperature, increase your heart rate, increase your flexibility and will help reduce the risk of tearing/straining unprepared muscles and soft tissue.

How to warm up

- Perform activity that uses your major joints and muscle groups, especially those used in your sport or activity
- Gradually build up the speed and intensity of the activity
- Perhaps start with some general stretching and then progress onto a functional activity that simulates your activity (e.g. rolling shoulders for swimming)
- Gradually increase your heart rate by performing aerobic activity like jogging, jumping, skipping.

In cooler conditions, you may need to warm up longer. The reverse is the case in warmer conditions. Wear a tracksuit so that you don't lose heat between warming up and performing your sport.



Cooling down

This will help remove waste products in your muscles and will help prevent soreness and stiffness. This can involve light jogging or swimming (2-3 minutes) as well as some general stretching (5-10 minutes).

Chinese proverb

The appearance of a disease is swift as an arrow; its disappearance slow like a thread.

Splints, tape and other products

Your physiotherapist can obtain a range of splints, braces, walking aids, tape and other equipment for you, to help you manage or overcome a problem or disability. A physiotherapist can advise what is the best option for you and ensure it fits properly and suits your condition. If you are considering obtaining a brace or some other type of medical device, ask your physiotherapist to recommend and supply it.



SWIMMING INJURIES

Overuse injury is often the main concern.

Swimming is one of the most popular sports and activities in Australia. According to Sports Medicine Australia, there were 2,414,300 Australians participating in swimming in 2008. Swimming is a popular activity as it is low impact and can be enjoyed by people of all ages both indoors and outdoors for fun, fitness or competition.



How many injuries?

Many swimmers actually hurt themselves outside of the pool. Slipping in the change-rooms or on the side of the pool can lead to cuts, concussion, sprains, strains and fractures. Also, hurting oneself diving into the pool is a problem. Acute injuries from actual swimming is not a huge problem but overuse injury is.

The upper limbs are injured more often than the lower limbs. In most strokes, the shoulder is the main area subject to overuse. Butterfly is the stroke most prone to shoulder problems but also leads to high rate of neck and back problems. Breast stroke has a tendency to cause overuse problems in the knees.

Swimming more than four times per week increases the risk of overuse injury.

Factors that may affect the rate of overuse injury are

- ❖ Age
- ❖ Previous injury
- ❖ Poor warm up
- ❖ Poor technique
- ❖ Poor flexibility
- ❖ Muscle imbalance
- ❖ Overtraining

Things you can do to prevent overuse injury:-

- ❖ Have some coaching to improve your technique
- ❖ Avoid overtraining
- ❖ Don't suddenly build up your workload
- ❖ Warm up and cool down properly
- ❖ Improve flexibility in areas such as your shoulders and thoracic spine
- ❖ Regularly use different strokes, especially if you are a breaststroker or butterfly swimmer
- ❖ Improve your core stability and muscle balance around your shoulder region.

What to do if you are injured

It is important that you initially use the RICER program outlined later in this newsletter. Have your physiotherapist assess your injury and commence treatment as soon as possible. As a preventative measure, your physiotherapist can review your flexibility, your shoulder muscle balance and your core stability. Working on these may help you prevent injury.

SHOULDER INJURIES

What to do

Shoulders are one of the most common areas injured in sport and general activity. Here is an overview of the common shoulder injuries and an insight as to how they may be managed:-

Rotator cuff injury/impingement

The small rotator cuff muscles that stabilise the shoulder can be injured due to strain, impingement, wear and tear and overuse. A major tear may require surgery. Physiotherapy which includes exercises to reduce muscle imbalance and improving flexibility can help a rotator cuff problem. Sometimes a cortisone injection can help (it won't actually cure the problem) recovery.

Biceps tendon injury

Biceps tendons can also be subject to strain, overuse and wear and tear. Physiotherapy can help enhance recovery.

Shoulder dislocation/subluxation

If your shoulder bone (humerus) pops out of joint, it will often pop back in very easily. Strengthening stabilising muscles can help prevent it happening again. If the shoulder recurrently dislocates, stabilising surgery may be required.

Acromioclavicular (A/C) joint injury

Your A/C joint is where your collar bone (clavicle) joins on to the shoulder. It can be injured in falls or collisions. Often rest and physiotherapy is the only treatment you will need but, if the injury is severe, surgery may be required.

Fractured clavicle

A fractured (broken) collar bone can be the result of a fall or a collision. If there is not too much deformity present, it is acceptable to treat the problem conservatively by resting the arm in a sling for several weeks. If there is a large deformity, or the fracture is in an area which doesn't heal very well, surgery may be required.



Your neck can cause shoulder pain

A neck problem can refer pain into the shoulder. A careful assessment initially can identify the neck as the cause of the pain and this will avoid pointless treatment aimed at the shoulder.

Treatment of shoulder injuries

Physiotherapists are well equipped to assess and treat the majority of shoulder injuries. If surgery is required, physiotherapy is often crucial in the rehabilitation phase. Shoulder problems not responding to physiotherapy can be referred on to an appropriate medical practitioner.

A regular "tune-up" can help you stay feeling better

If you have a chronic or recurrent problem, such as back pain, neck pain, headaches or arthritis, a regular "tune-up" may help you enjoy life more.

Most of these problems mentioned respond very well to a course of physiotherapy. In conjunction, your physiotherapist will usually give you self treatment exercises, to help you improve your problem and maintain this improvement. Unfortunately, spinal problems and arthritic pain can recur and can make your life miserable. If this is the case with you, or someone you know, then regular maintenance treatment (or "tune-up" sessions) should be considered. "Tune-up" sessions will help keep your joints mobile, will release tight muscles and will update your self treatment exercises, so that they are



giving you maximum benefit. Many patients find that a tune-up session every few weeks can help keep them feeling good and stop them having repeated acute episodes of pain. It is also more cost effective than having extensive treatment to overcome an acute episode of pain.

If you feel you would benefit from regular maintenance treatment, please ring to book a time to discuss this with your physiotherapist.

What types of conditions can a physiotherapist help you with?

Many patients are unaware of the many conditions that can benefit from physiotherapy. Below is a list of some of the common problems that we help deal with:-



- ❖ Back and neck pain
- ❖ Headaches
- ❖ Sprained ankles
- ❖ Injured knees
- ❖ Arthritic pain and stiffness
- ❖ Shoulder pain
- ❖ Tennis elbows
- ❖ Tendon problems
- ❖ Muscle tears
- ❖ Hand and foot problems
- ❖ Bruising
- ❖ Fractures
- ❖ After joint replacements
- ❖ After joint and bone surgery

If you have any of the above problems, and you want to improve as quickly as possible, have an assessment from one of the physiotherapists at this clinic.

Good first aid will get you back on track quicker

If you suffer an injury, a knowledge of appropriate first aid will minimise bleeding and further damage. This in turn will help you overcome your injury as quickly as possible.

The basics of first aid can be summed up by remembering RICER for the first 48 hours. This stands for:-

REST the injured part so that no further damage can occur. This may mean stopping work or sport immediately and it may also mean applying some sort of splint to prevent movement of the injured part.

ICE should be applied to the injured part for 15-20 minutes, every 30-60 minutes, to slow down bleeding and swelling. Make sure you avoid an ice burn by wrapping the ice in a damp cloth, so that it does not directly contact the skin.

COMPRESSION will also help reduce swelling and bleeding. This can be done by wrapping a bandage around the injured part or by compressing the injured site with your hand.

ELEVATE the injured part so that bleeding and swelling flow away from the injured part.

REFER the injured person to a health professional for further assessment and management. This would usually mean to your family doctor or your physiotherapist.

Physiotherapists are experts in managing sports and soft tissue injuries such as bruises, sprained ligaments and strained muscles.

Carry on this protocol for the first 48 hours after an injury. Also, during this time, avoid HARM. This means avoid Heat, Alcohol, Return to activity and Massage until you are sure bleeding and swelling have stopped.

QUOTE

"Just because you're not sick doesn't mean you're healthy."



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HOURS

The practice hours are
MON-FRI: 7.00am - 8.00pm

SAT: 8.00am - 1pm
(Please ring for an appointment)

CONDITIONS TREATED

You can have the following conditions treated at our clinic:-

Manipulative Therapy for the Treatment of:

Spinal Problems

Sports Injuries

Treatment of Neck Related Headaches

Postural Assessment

Treatment of Work Injuries

Treatment of TMJ (Jaw) Problems

SERVICES AVAILABLE

Some of the services available to you are:-

Orthotic Assessment & Prescription

Home Visits

Nursing Home/Hostel Visits

Post-operative Rehabilitation

Hydrotherapy

Assessment and Treatment of Balance Disorders

Exercise Prescription and Monitoring of Gym Programmes

Clinical Pilates

Massage and Myotherapy

FURTHER INFORMATION

Preferred Provider for HBA, MBF and Medibank Private - HICAPS available for most health funds - we bill the health fund for the rebate - you pay gap amount only

Most Cards Accepted

EFTPOS Facility Available

Dear Physio

Q. I have sciatica running down my leg and I have been told that I need to have an injection into my back. Why?

Epidural steroid injections are often performed to help reduce inflammation around a spinal nerve or disc. They may help a little or a lot depending on if they are applied to the area causing your symptoms. Often a local anaesthetic is mixed into the injection and good pain relief helps your doctor to identify where your symptoms are coming from. Sometimes people get long term relief after these injections, however, you need to understand that it is not a cure. You still should be having physiotherapy and carrying out your rehabilitation exercises.



Q. My child plays a lot of sport and has been experiencing knee pain. What can be done?

If a serious cause has been ruled out (e.g. infection), it is likely that knee problems in children is due to a combination of growth and overuse. Biomechanical problems such as tight tissue, weak muscles and poor foot posture can contribute. Your child should definitely see a physiotherapist.



Q. I need to get fit. Can a physio help?

Physiotherapists can definitely help you get fit by prescribing an appropriate exercise program which you can either do under supervision or under your own steam.



Q. I have had a knee replacement. When should I start physio?

You will often start physio in hospital as soon as you wake up from the anaesthetic. Seeing your local physio soon after your leave hospital is very important so that you recover as quickly as possible.



Q. I experience chest pain. My doctors says my heart and lungs are fine and I should have physio. Why?

Your spine can cause chest pain. If a more serious cause has been ruled out by your doctors a trial of physiotherapy can help spine related chest pain.



Q. My elderly mother broke her wrist and is in plaster. Should she have physio?

In most instances, one should have physio after a wrist fracture. This will help regain movement, strength and function.



Treatment may be as simple as showing your mother some exercises to do at home but sometimes it takes a lot of work to get the wrist working properly again and she will need several visits.

Q. I went to my physio and he recommended Acupuncture for my problem. I didn't know physios did acupuncture. Is that common?

Many physiotherapists are embracing acupuncture to try to enhance patient recovery. The



Australian Physiotherapy Association now runs courses for physiotherapists to obtain skills in this area. Acupuncture can be a valuable tool. If your physiotherapist doesn't perform acupuncture themselves but thinks it may be worthwhile, he or she may be able to refer you to a colleague who does.

Q. Do ankle injuries cause arthritis?

Ankle injuries account for approximately 25% of the injuries that occur in running and jumping sports. Of these, 20-40% of patients with these injuries experience chronic ankle instability. 70-80% of these patients develop post-traumatic ankle arthritis. Arthritis can develop a long time after injury. In one study, it occurred on average 21 years after injury. Intensive rehabilitation after an ankle injury is very important to lessen the likelihood of this happening.

Are you due to have orthopaedic surgery?

After most knee, shoulder, hip, back and other joint surgery you should be having physiotherapy to enhance your recovery. Ask

your surgeon when you should commence this (usually as soon as possible). You can also request that you have your physiotherapy carried out at this clinic.



Referring others to our clinic

If you know someone with any of the problems outlined in this newsletter, please let him or her know about our clinic. We are very grateful for any referrals we receive and we will endeavour to provide patients referred to us with the highest quality of care. Physiotherapy offers a safe, gentle and effective treatment approach for a variety of conditions.



The information in this newsletter is for general patient interest. If you have a problem you should get it properly assessed by your physiotherapist or family doctor.