

Basketball Injuries

Preventing and treating basketball injuries

Basketball is fun for everyone, from young kids to grown-ups. As with any sport, there is a risk of injury when you play basketball. Here are some tips to help you prevent injuries. If you do get hurt, this flyer also explains how to treat some of the more common injuries at home.

Injury Prevention Tips

- Wear gym shoes that fit snugly, are non-skid and have high tops.
- Use a mouth guard, ankle braces and safety glasses.
- Warm up and stretch before each session.
- Use proper technique and follow the rules.
- Do not wear jewelry.
- Play on a clean, dry, safe surface.
- If you are injured, take the time needed to heal before you return to sports.

Ankle Sprains

Ankle sprains occur most often when you land on another player's foot. In most cases, the ankle turns inward. Pain around the bony bump on the outside of your ankle is normal. You may have swelling and/or bruising. Your ankle may feel unstable.

Treat ankle sprains with the R.I.C.E. method.

R.I.C.E. Method

- **R**est the injured area.
- **I**ce the injured area for 20 minutes every 2 hours.
- Apply a **C**ompression wrap (like an Ace bandage) to reduce swelling.
- **E**levate the injured area to a level above the heart.



Knee Sprains

Knee sprains can be caused by a sudden stop or change in direction. They can happen with or without contact from another player. Your knee may feel like it popped or gave out and may feel unstable after injury. The pain may be in one small spot or throughout the whole knee. Swelling may occur within the joint, feeling like pressure behind the knee cap or in the joint itself. Swelling may or may not be visible.

Treat knee sprains with the R.I.C.E. method. If your knee is very unstable, you have a lot of pain or your knee is popping or clicking, see a doctor to make sure you don't have serious ligament damage.

Head and Face Wounds

Head and face wounds often occur due to a direct blow from another player. The eyes, mouth, chin and nose are easy to injure. Head and face wounds bleed a lot.

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Apply direct pressure to the site of the injury to control the bleeding. Wounds that are jagged, gaping open, very deep or wide, or won't stop bleeding may require stitches. In these cases, go to the emergency room right away.

Coaches, trainers and players should make sure that clothing and the playing surface are cleaned well before play continues.

Muscle Injury

Muscle injuries can happen from overuse or lack of flexibility. Some muscle injuries may come with swelling, bruising and a visible indent in the muscle.

Treat muscle injuries using the R.I.C.E. method. For a minor overuse muscle injury, also try light stretching.

Bruises

Bruises are caused by a direct blow or collision with another athlete.

Treat bruises using the R.I.C.E. method. Light stretching and use of the joints above and below the injury can help prevent stiffness and pain.

To Learn More

- www.seattlechildrens.org
- **Seattle Children's Resource Line**
206-987-2500 or 866-987-2500
toll-free Washington, Alaska, Montana, Idaho
- **Your child's healthcare provider**

Seattle Children's will make this information available in alternate formats upon request. Call Marketing Communications at 206-987-5205 or 206-987-2280 (TTY).

This handout has been reviewed by clinical staff at Seattle Children's. However, your child's needs are unique. Before you act or rely upon this information, please talk with your child's healthcare provider.

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