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## Sports Injuries

Occur when stress is placed on bones or muscles as a result of sports activities.

### What to look for...

There are different types of sports injuries.

- Dislocation - when bones separate and ligaments tear at a joint.
- A fracture (usually at ankle, hand, wrist or collarbone) can be either simple or compound. Simple fractures occur when the broken bone remains beneath the surface of the skin. Compound fractures are when the bone protrudes through the skin.
- Most sports require people to use their shoulder muscles and joints. Injuries are common in this area.
- Tennis elbow involves the outer elbow. (see section on tennis elbow).
- Lower-back injuries are very common in sports that require a great deal of bending up and down. (see back problems)
- Groin strain is another common sports problem and may result from intense movement of the legs.
- Quite commonly, knees are subjected to jumping and other strains.
- Leg injuries (shin splints and tendonitis) as well as fractures occur if you constantly run, walk or stand for long periods.

### Symptoms include:

- Any pain, tenderness, swelling or discomfort.
- Pain, tenderness, swelling and deformity may indicate a fracture.
- Pain, restricted movement, strange appearance as well as swelling in a joint indicate a possible dislocation.
- Pain in the elbow.
- Pain below the kneecap may be a sign of tendonitis.

### Traditional Treatment

Sports injuries are treated with the purpose of relieving the pain associated with them, to repair bones get you back on your feet.

Rest, ice, compression and elevation are important for most minor sports injuries.

Injuries such as tendonitis usually need you to rest and commence a physio program to keep the area flexible and strong.

It is important to visit your health care practitioner to be diagnosed and offered immediate help.

### At-Home Remedies

- Replacing your lost fluids by drinking lots of filtered water.
- Ice packs reduce swelling.
- To relieve cramping, elevate the affected area to direct blood flow toward the heart. Gently stretching the muscle will usually stop a cramp. (See also muscle cramps).
- A nice hot bath with your favourite aromatherapy oils can do wonders for tired and sore muscles.
- Rest, ice, compression and elevation are vital for most sports injuries.

### Prevention

Most people should consult their health care practitioner before starting any exercise program (especially if you have a heart or other medical condition or you are over the age of 40).

Warming up before starting your sports activity is vital to condition your muscles. This includes some slow walking, light rebounding, then stretching. You should take part in your chosen sport at least 3 to 4 times per week to maintain your fitness levels.

### When to Seek Further Professional Advice

- You notice any of the symptoms listed above.

