

Ask A Nurse Newsletter

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What is the "Ask a Nurse" Program?

The ASK A NURSE program is staffed by University of Delaware nursing faculty and graduate and undergraduate nursing students.

Our mission is to provide health and wellness education and programs to children and families.

Reach us at askanurse@udel.edu



A Parent's Guide to Sports Injury Prevention

It makes parents' hearts pound; panic and fear shooting through their minds. One moment, a fun game is under way - in a blink of an eye, a sports injury has one of their children lying on the ground hurt. What happened? Can she walk? Is he bleeding?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), scenarios like this are not rare:

- Nationally, over 775,000 children under age 15 are treated in hospital emergency departments for sports-related injuries each year.
- About 80 percent of these injuries are from football, basketball, baseball, or soccer.

Most sports-related injuries in children - about two-thirds of them - are sprains and strains. Only 5 percent of sports injuries involve broken bones.

Keep reading for tips on Sports Injury Prevention

April 24-30 is National Infant Immunization Week

Vaccines are among the most successful and cost-effective public health tools available for preventing disease and death. They not only help protect vaccinated individuals from developing potentially serious diseases, they also help protect entire communities by preventing and reducing the spread of infectious agents.

The following is the schedule for infant/childhood immunizations.

Birth-1 month	Hepatitis B
1-4 months	Hepatitis B
2 months	Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (DTaP), Haemophilus influenza B (Hib), Inactivated polio (IPV), pneumococcal vaccine (PCV)
4 months	DTaP, Hib, IPV, PCV
6 months	DTaP, Hib, PCV
6-18 months	Hepatitis B, IPV
12-15 months	Hib, Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR), PCV
12-18 months	Varicella vaccine
15-18 months	DTaP
4-6 years	DTaP, MMR, IPV
11-12 years	Tetanus (Td)
Annually	Influenza vaccine for high risk children over age 6

Resources: <http://www.cdc.gov>

<http://www.nemours.com>

Before Getting in the Game

Decide if your child is ready for team sports.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends team sports only for children six years of age and older.

Why? First, mental and emotional ability: most children younger than six don't understand the concept and rules of team play, and may not have the emotional development and eagerness to play.

Second, physical ability and age-appropriate skills: there are things a 14 year old can do (such as throwing a curve ball in baseball) that an 8 year old should not do because of differences in physical development and increased risk of injury. Your experience, intuition, and child's doctor can help you make these decisions. *Push your child to play a sport too soon – physically or emotionally -- can increase risk of injury.*

Pick wisely. Enroll your child in organized sports through schools, community clubs, and recreation leagues where there may be adults who are trained in the prevention, recognition and immediate care of athletic injuries.

Take it easy. Ease into any new recreation such as hockey, skateboarding, or playground activity to give the body time to strengthen and adapt.

Be a role model. Nothing screams "Hypocrite!" and will make a child ignore protective steps more than a parent who lectures about safety and then doesn't follow their own demands. It's simple: when kids see parents practicing proper joint protection, they're more likely to comply.

Look to the pros. Point out to kids how sports idols are smart about the equipment they use and how they play or exercise.

Put the child in charge. There are so many colors and styles of protective gear to choose from that kids can pick the look they want. Let them! They're more likely to use items that they like.



Sports Injuries - The Basics

Sprains And Strains

A sprain is an injury (over-stretching or tearing) to a ligament. A ligament is a band of tissue that connects two or more bones at a joint and prevents excessive movement of the joint. A strain is an injury to either a muscle or a tendon. A tendon is a tough, fibrous cord of tissue that connects muscle to bone.

Growth Plate Injuries

The growth plate is the area at the end of the long bones (in fingers, the outer bone of the forearm, the collarbone, the hip, the bone of the upper leg, the lower leg bones, the ankle, and the foot) in growing children and adolescents. When growth is complete, sometime in the teen years, the growth plate is replaced by solid bone.

Repetitive Motion Injuries

Stress fractures (where the ligament pulls off small pieces of bone) and tendonitis (inflammation of a tendon) occur from overuse of muscles and tendons. While they may not show up on x-rays, they do cause pain and discomfort. Treatments may include R.I.C.E (Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation), immobilization with a cast, or physical therapy.

First Aid for Sports Injuries

- **Rest:** Reduce or stop using the injured area for 48 hours.
- **Ice:** Apply a cold pack, ice bag, or a plastic bag filled with crushed ice on the injured area for 20 minutes at a time, 4 to 8 times per day.
- **Compression:** Compression of an injured ankle, knee, or wrist may help reduce swelling. Use elastic wraps, special boots, air casts or splints. Ask your doctor which is best.
- **Elevation:** Keep the injured area elevated above the level of the heart.

