

Soccer Injuries

As soccer grows in popularity, especially with our youth, we find ourselves dealing with injuries more and more often. The most common injuries are sprains, strains and fractures. Other common injuries can include concussions, cartilage damage, bursitis and tendonitis. Let's clarify these injuries and what you as an athlete, coach or parent can do for each.

Sprains: A stretching or tearing of a ligament which attaches two bones. Common in the ankle and knee. These can be easily treated with Rest-Ice-Compression-Elevation (RICE) until seen by a medically trained professional who is knowledgeable of muscular-skeletal injuries.

Strains: A stretching or tearing of a muscle or tendon. Like sprains, you can use RICE until further evaluation can be performed.

Fracture: Also called a break, occurs with bones. There are many different classifications to describe the type of actual fracture. Open fractures have broken through the skin while closed have not. Stress fractures are micro-fractures in the bone and shin splints are a more general term used to describe injury to the lower leg and can involve the bones (tibia & fibula), muscles, tendons and other soft tissue in the area and the compartment which encapsulate these tissues. Often you will see signs of shin splints prior to stress fractures. Again, use RICE until seen by your medical professional.

Cartilage: Most common in the knee with the meniscus. Often caused from a rotational motion and loading (weight bearing) of the joint. Cartilage contusions (bruise) can occur as well as a tear of different types. Use RICE until seen by your medical professional.

Bursitis / tendonitis: An inflammation of the joint which affects the bursa and/or tendons and surrounding soft tissue. Causes vary from traumatic / acute injury to chronic / over-use and can also be affected by the individual going through a growth spurt (weight or height) often called 'growing pains'. RICE until seen by a medical professional.

Concussion: A concussion is an injury to the brain that results in temporary loss of normal brain function. Concussions should always be taken very seriously and always be evaluated by and treated by a medically trained professional. Causes can be through direct contact to the head, whiplash, sudden rotational movement of the neck. Always seek immediate medical attention.

Common Symptoms of Concussion

- Confusion
- Vision disturbances (double or blurry vision)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Ringing ears
- Loss of smell or taste
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- * Headache
- * Dizziness or imbalance
- * Memory loss
- * Difficulty concentrating
- * Trouble falling asleep