

6

WAYS TO PREVENT AND MANAGE SPORTS INJURIES

Bill Robertson, MD, knows about sports pain. A former college linebacker, he has served as assistant team physician to the New England Patriots, Boston Red Sox, and Boston Bruins, and he is currently the team physician to the Grand Prairie AirHogs baseball team. He offers these tips for avoiding and managing a sports injury, no matter your level of play.

1 RESIST 'NO PAIN, NO GAIN'

"Playing through pain can result in overuse injuries such as tendonitis, bursitis, stress fractures, and muscle strains. It can worsen the condition or create a problem in another part of your body."

2 GET READY TO PLAY

"Don't go from a period of relative inactivity to very aggressive activity. Instead, start several weeks ahead of time with a good conditioning program that combines aerobic and resistance training."

3 STAY HYDRATED

"The key to avoiding dehydration and heat-related illnesses is prevention. Drink 16 ounces of water or a sports drink an hour before intense activity, then 4 to 8 ounces every 15 to 20 minutes during your activity. Water is fine during the first hour, but then add in a sports drink to replace electrolytes."

4 PROTECT THE KNEES

"Avoid steep hills, embankments, and stairs if you're a runner; they aren't good for the knees. Wear a good, supportive running shoe as well. If you have flat feet or high arches, orthotics or inserts can sometimes help prevent ankle and knee problems."

5 REST AND REHAB

"After an injury, rest often isn't enough. Instead, a period of relative rest and rehabilitation of certain muscle groups is preferred. This will help maximize the strength and endurance of key muscles that will aid in preventing a recurrence of injury when you return to play."

6 KNOW WHEN TO SEEK HELP

"Consider seeing a sports medicine professional if you have an injury with severe pain and swelling. Also, if you've been treating an injury for 2 or 3 months and you're still having pain at rest or with routine daily activities, or the pain prevents participation in your sport despite changes to your training program, it's time to seek professional help."

IF YOU DO GET INJURED ... "At UT Southwestern, the goal at our multidisciplinary sports medicine center is to get patients back to activity as quickly as they can, but in a safe and effective manner. While I'm an orthopaedic surgeon, my partner, Dr. Robert Dimeff, and I have vast experience in the nonoperative management of sports-related injuries. We also have a phenomenal team of physical therapists."

To schedule an appointment with Dr. Robertson, call 214-645-8300.

Bill Robertson, MD

Assistant Professor of Orthopaedic Surgery
Specialist in Sports Medicine and Shoulder Surgery