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Plan Now to Curb Youth Sports Injuries



Lake Hiawatha, NJ, September 2014 — With the start of a new school year, comes a new season of youth sports and growing concerns about player safety.

A new survey by the non-profit advocacy group, Safe Kids Worldwide, finds "an alarming gap" in what is known about sports safety and what is being done to reduce the risk of injury to young athletes, whether playing scholastic, intramural, recreational, select or club team sports.

According to the survey of 1,000 young athletes (seventh through 10th grade), 1,000 coaches and 1,000 parents:

- **42% of players report that they have hidden or downplayed an injury during a game so they could keep playing; 62% say they know someone else who has done so.**
- **54% say they have played injured and 70% of those kids say they told a coach or parent that they were hurt. (Top reasons given for playing injured: it wasn't that bad (18%); couldn't let the team down (13%); didn't want to be benched (12%).)**
- **33% say they have been injured as a result of dirty play from an opponent; 28% agree that it is normal to commit hard fouls and play rough to "send a message" during a game.**
- **53% of coaches say they have felt pressure from a parent or player to put an athlete back in a game if the child has been injured.**

These findings highlight behaviors within youth sports that need to be addressed by players, parents and coaches in order to reduce injuries.

The new report is the latest to point out a culture that gives rise to more injuries. The culture is you keep playing when you get injured. You stay in the game. You sometimes even practice routines that contribute to injuries.

Also of particular concern are injuries resulting from over-use. In an effort to improve their game and get to the next level, many young athletes start specializing in a sport at an earlier age playing it exclusively all year long. This sets up an increased risk of physical injury and also the risk of getting emotionally burned out from a sport they love. On the other side of the argument—similar concerns apply to doing too many sports at one time. The body needs time for rest and recovery as fatigue can also contribute to injuries in children playing sports.

The number of kids who are injured seriously enough while playing sports to warrant a trip to the emergency room — 1.24 million in 2013 - that's 3,400 a day.

Although many of the injuries are bumps and bruises, others are far more serious. According to the report, 13% of kids surveyed stated they had a broken bone; 4% said a torn ligament (ACL) injury; 12% said a concussion or head injury, and even more report having a headache (28%) or dizziness (24%) after playing a sport, both possible symptoms of a concussion or dehydration.

To find out what you can do to help prevent these injuries, Continue on Page 2....



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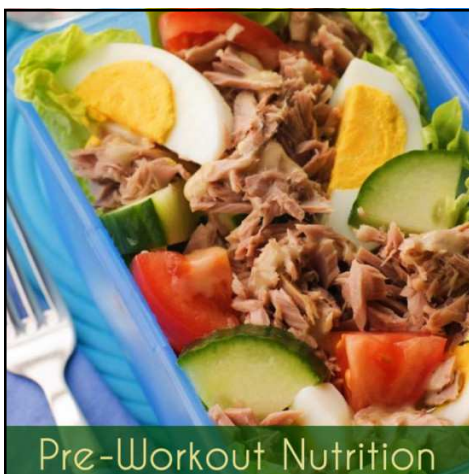
Plan Now to Curb Youth Sports Injuries Continued...

Having kids participate in sports is one important way to address the nation's youth overweight and obesity epidemic and offers valuable lessons in leadership and teamwork, but because of the reports of injuries, more and more parents are becoming cautious of having their children participate. The following recommendations should be considered to help keep your kids safely in the game:

1. *Bring together coaches, parents and athletes before the season begins to set ground rules on the team's approach to prevent injuries.*
2. *Ensure coaches are certified in injury prevention skills as well as emergency procedures.*
3. *Teach athletes ways to prevent injuries emphasizing the use of proper technique, strength training, warm-up exercises, stretching, and balance/proprioceptive work.*
4. *Encourage athletes to speak up when they're injured.*
5. *Prevent overuse injuries by encouraging athletes to take time from playing only one sport and to get stronger and develop skills learned in another sport.*
6. *Remove injured athletes from play.*
7. *Put an end to dirty play and rule-breaking. Call fouls that could cause injuries.*
8. *Have injured athletes evaluated by a professional to ensure return-to-play criteria are met before returning to the field.*



What You Need to Know About Your Pre-Workout Meal



Pre-Workout Nutrition

MYTH: What you eat right before a workout does NOT fuel your workout or your muscles. Glycogen is your muscles main fuel supply. It takes 24 hours to refill your glycogen stores so your body must rely on existing glycogen and fat stores to fuel your workout.

This means what you consume the previous day matters most for your workout. If you are regularly consuming proteins, healthy natural fats and good carbohydrates like vegetables and fruit, you will have plenty of glycogen stored for your body to use as fuel. The purpose of the pre-workout meal or snack is to ward off hunger and to stabilize blood sugar levels...NOT to fuel your workout.

WHEN: When you should eat your pre-workout meal will vary for everyone. Some can eat right before a workout and feel great, while others feel like they would get sick unless they have an empty stomach. Most people tend to feel the best when they eat 15 minutes to an hour before a workout.

HOW MUCH: How much you need to eat before your workout will depend on what type of activity you are doing and for how long. We strive for optimum performance, so you should eat enough to feel good and have enough energy for your workout, but not so much that you feel sick or bloated.

AND FINALLY—WHAT?: Choose foods that are easily digestible because you want your energy to go into your workout, not digesting food. Most people perform and feel the best with a mix of protein, fat and a small amount of nutrient dense low glycemic carbs (and proper hydration of course!). Good pre-workout snack options include: hard boiled eggs, celery sticks with almond butter, coconut flakes, an avocado, beef jerkey, chicken, tuna, bananas or homemade trail mix.