

The Key To Life Is Balance



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Soccer Issue

Volume 1, Issue 1



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Did You Know...

Introduction

Welcome to the first edition of this newsletter. In writing this column, we hope that you will gain valuable information in the prevention of sports injuries. We encourage anyone who has specific questions to come to see us at our office in Bradford. We would gladly address any questions or concerns you might have.

In the pages to follow the following topics are covered:

- Common soccer injuries.
- First aid of common injuries
- Injury prevention
- Basic Stretches

So read on and enjoy this first issue of what I hope to become a regular newsletter.



Common Injuries

The most common injuries in soccer can be broken down in to the following categories:

- General trauma
- Sprains
- Strains

By far the most common joints to be injured are the foot/ankle (30%♀; 30%♂);

hip/thigh/leg(27%♀; 29%♂); knee (18%♀; 14%♂); torso (5%♀; 7%♂); forearm/wrist/hand (5%♀; 7%♂).

Approximately 40% of these injuries occur during normal practices, while the remaining 60% occur during game situations. Of these injuries only 2-3% require surgery (and

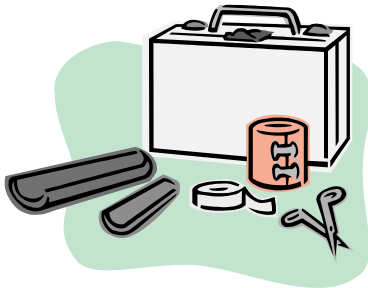
of these about 1-3% are of the knee).

From: The National Athletic Trainers Association

- The 2002 World Cup was the planet's largest sporting event; over one billion people followed the month long tournament involving 32 finalist countries.
- The largest crowd to watch a World Cup match was 199,850 fans for Brazil vs. Uruguay in 1950 while the smallest was 300 for Romania vs. Peru in 1930.
- On their way to the 1962 World Cup semi-finals, Chilean players said they consumed Swiss cheese to beat the Swiss, spaghetti to beat the Italians, vodka to beat the Russians, and tried coffee to beat Brazil. Apparently, the coffee was not strong enough as Brazil won 4-2.

First Aid:

Injuries are an unfortunate experience for some soccer players. Immediate and proper first aid treatment of a fresh injury ensure a player's speedy recovery and return to game shape. So, every coach and player should be aware of some basic first aid principles.



When an injury occurs, the normal boundaries of tissue have been disrupted. Small blood vessels dilate and blood flow increases in the damaged area. Blood plasma escapes into the surrounding tissues causing swelling and increased pressure

on nerve endings resulting in pain. This process can last for 24-48 hours and is known as the acute phase.

Immediate treatment of the acute phase should follow the P.R.I.C.E. protocol. That is:

(P)rotect-the area from further harm, such as using crutches to unweight an injured leg.

(R)est-limit undue stress to the injured area

(I)ce-apply ice packs over the injured area for 15-20 minutes every 2-3hours. **Never** apply

heat in the acute phase.

(C)ompress-apply elastic wraps to limit excessive swelling.

(E)levate-the injured area above the level of the heart.

If a player has extremely limited movement, pain over a bony prominence, a visible deformity, or is unable to weight bear, do not attempt to move the injured area. Further medical attention may be required. If in doubt, do not hesitate to transport the player to the nearest hospital by ambulance if necessary.

Injury Prevention

Many soccer injuries can be prevented through proper equipment selection, field surface upkeep, and adherence to the rules of the game. Follow these simple rules to play it safe:



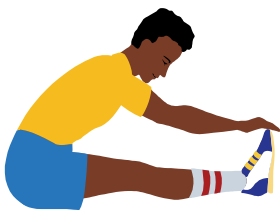
Play safe and stay in the game!

- Players must wear shin guards to help protect their lower legs. Not only is it a rule but soccer tournament records show that most players who sustained lower leg injuries were not protected by adequate shin guards.
- Players should wear proper shoes for the field condition.
- Shoes with cleats are preferred on grass or wet fields but are inappropriate for indoor conditions. Running shoes provide inadequate support for the quick side-to-side movements performed in game situations.
- Players should remove all watches and jewelry. An accidental watch in the eye or ring caught on the goal post can cause catastrophic injuries
- Players should not sit or crawl on the goal posts, or hang from the net. Injuries and even deaths have occurred when goal posts have fallen onto players

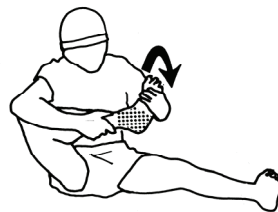
- Soccer goal posts should be well padded and properly secured.
- The playing surface must be kept in good condition. A careful pre-game inspection of the field should always precede play.
- Encourage sportsmanship, fair play, and respect for the opponent at all times. Soccer is a "beautiful game" and coaches, players referees, and spectators should ensure that ugly emotions and violence prevent the enjoyment of such a graceful sport.

Stretches:

Note: These stretches were taken from Bob Andersons book entitled [STRETCHING](#). Shelter publications, Inc., Bolinas, California. 1980.



Rotate the ankle clockwise and counter-clockwise 10X to gently stretch the ligaments.

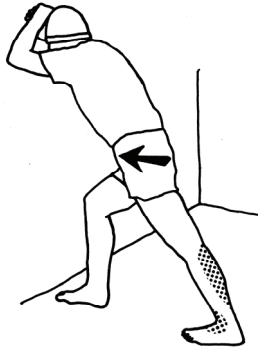


Gently pull the toes downwards to stretch the tendons on the top of the foot for 10s.



With the thumbs, massage the arch of the foot with a pressure that feels good for 2-3 min.





To stretch your calf, place one leg straight behind the other keeping the lower back flat. Be sure to keep the heel on the ground and the toes pointing straight ahead. Slowly move the hips forward until a comfortable stretch is felt and hold the position for 30s. Repeat on the other leg.

TIP: A more effective stretch can be achieved if the weight is shifted to the outside of the foot being stretched.



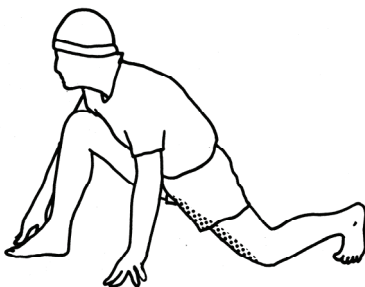
To stretch the hamstrings, sit with one leg straight and the other leg bent such that the sole of that foot is resting on the inside of the opposite thigh. Slowly slide your hands down the straight leg until a comfortable stretch is felt. Hold for 30s. Repeat on the other leg.

TIP: If you cannot easily reach down the straight leg, hook a towel around the sole of that foot. Then use the ends of the towel to pull yourself forward.



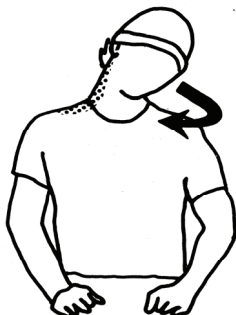
To stretch the groin area, sit with the soles of the feet together. Hold onto the toes and slowly bend forward at the hips by pulling on the toes until a comfortable stretch is felt. A stretch may also be felt in the low back. Hold this position for 30s.

TIP: Apply pressure on the top of the knees with the elbows while bending forward to achieve a greater stretch.



To stretch the front of the hip and thigh, lunge forward so that the knee of the forward leg is directly above the ankle. The knee of the trailing leg should be resting on the floor. Without changing the positions of the feet, lower the hips downwards to create a gentle stretch. Hold for 30s and change sides.

TIP: To achieve a greater stretch on the front of the thigh, reach behind with the opposite hand to grab the foot of the training leg. Gently pull the foot towards the buttocks until a comfortable stretch is felt.



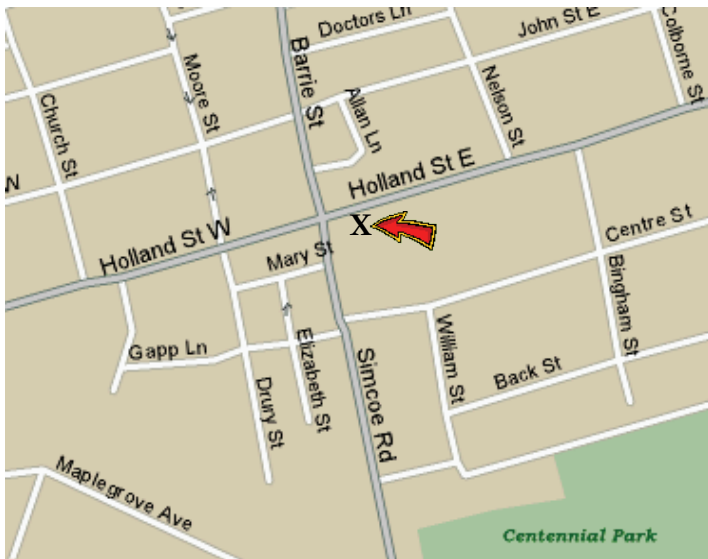
Sit in a comfortable position. Slowly and gently roll your head in a clockwise direction. While rolling your head you may reach a point where the neck feels stiff and tight. Hold your neck in this position anywhere between 5-10 seconds.

TIP: Under no circumstance should you feel neck pain or discomfort when performing this neck stretch. If you develop any awkward sensation in your arm or hands such as pins/needles or numbness stop this stretch immediately.



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