

Upper Body

Shoulder Impingement

Shoulder impingement occurs when the tendons of the rotator cuff become irritated or compressed as they pass through the shoulder joint.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen shoulder muscles:** Incorporate exercises that strengthen the rotator cuff and shoulder stabilizers.
- **Proper technique:** Ensure your serving and overhead shots are done with proper form to reduce strain.
- **Warm-up:** Perform a thorough warm-up focusing on the shoulder area before playing.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the shoulder and apply ice to reduce inflammation.
- **Physical therapy:** A physical therapist can provide exercises to improve shoulder strength and flexibility.
- **Medication:** Over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medications can help manage pain.

Rotator Cuff Strain

A rotator cuff strain involves injury to the muscles or tendons that stabilize the shoulder joint.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen rotator cuff muscles:** Perform exercises that specifically target the rotator cuff.
- **Proper technique:** Use correct techniques for serving and hitting overhead shots.
- **Warm-up and stretch:** Ensure thorough warm-up and stretching of the shoulders before play.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the affected shoulder and apply ice to reduce swelling.
- **Physical therapy:** Engage in physical therapy to strengthen the shoulder and improve range of motion.
- **Medications:** Over-the-counter pain relievers can help manage pain and inflammation. Be sure to check with your healthcare provider before starting taking any new medication.

Biceps Tendinitis

Biceps tendinitis involves inflammation of the biceps tendon, usually from repetitive strain or overuse.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen biceps and shoulders:** Perform exercises that strengthen both the biceps and the surrounding muscles.
- **Avoid overuse:** Take breaks and avoid repetitive overhead movements that strain the biceps tendon.
- **Proper form:** Use proper technique to avoid unnecessary strain on the biceps.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the arm and apply ice to the affected area.
- **Anti-inflammatory medications:** Over-the-counter medications can help reduce inflammation. Be sure to check with your healthcare provider before starting taking any new medication.
- **Physical therapy:** Engage in physical therapy to address muscle imbalances and improve flexibility.

General Tips for All Injuries

- **Listen to your body:** Pay attention to any signs of discomfort or pain and address them promptly.
- **Stay hydrated:** Proper hydration helps maintain muscle function and reduce the risk of cramps and strains.
- **Consult a healthcare provider:** If injuries are persistent or severe, consult a Summa Health healthcare provider for accurate diagnosis and treatment.

In general, staying fit, warming up properly and using the right equipment are key to preventing injuries. If you experience persistent pain or injury, consulting a healthcare professional is always a good idea for personalized advice and treatment.

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Common Pickleball Injuries, Prevention and Treatment



Pickleball has gained popularity for its accessibility and engaging gameplay. However, as participation increases, so does the incidence of upper and lower body injuries. These injuries often arise from repetitive motions, improper technique or inadequate preparation. Understanding the common causes and implementing preventive measures are crucial for ensuring players can enjoy the game while minimizing the risk of injury.

Wrist Sprain

A wrist sprain involves stretching or tearing of the ligaments in the wrist, often caused by falling on an outstretched hand or awkward movements.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen wrist muscles:** Perform exercises that build strength and flexibility in the wrist.
- **Use wrist supports:** Consider using a wrist brace for added support during play.
- **Proper technique:** Ensure proper technique when hitting or receiving shots to minimize stress on the wrist.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the wrist and apply ice to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Compression and elevation:** Use a compression bandage and keep the wrist elevated to manage swelling.
- **Rehabilitation exercises:** Once pain subsides, engage in rehabilitation exercises to restore strength and mobility.

Lower Body

Lower body injuries are also common in pickleball due to the sport's quick lateral movements, sudden stops, and changes in direction. Five of the most common lower body injuries in pickleball are ankle sprains, hamstring strains, patellar tendinitis, groin strains and Achilles tendinitis.

Ankle Sprains

Ankle sprains occur when the ligaments supporting the ankle are stretched or torn, often from rolling the ankle during quick movements.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Wear supportive footwear:** Choose shoes with good ankle support and cushioning designed for pickleball or similar sports.
- **Strengthen ankles:** Perform exercises that strengthen the muscles around the ankles and improve balance.
- **Warm-up:** Do a thorough warm-up focusing on the lower body to prepare the ankles for activity.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the ankle and apply ice to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Compression and elevation:** Use an elastic bandage for compression and elevate the ankle to minimize swelling.
- **Physical therapy:** Engage in physical therapy to restore strength and mobility once the acute pain has subsided.

Hamstring Strains

A hamstring strain involves tearing or overstretching the muscles at the back of the thigh, often from sprinting or sudden changes in direction.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Stretch and strengthen:** Regularly stretch and strengthen the hamstrings with appropriate exercises.
- **Warm-up:** Ensure a thorough warm-up with dynamic stretches to prepare the muscles for activity.
- **Avoid overexertion:** Gradually increase the intensity and duration of play to avoid overloading the muscles.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the injured hamstring and apply ice to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Gentle stretching:** Once pain decreases, gently stretch the hamstring to restore flexibility.
- **Physical therapy:** Engage in exercises to strengthen the hamstrings and prevent future injuries.

Patellar Tendinitis (Jumper's Knee)

Patellar tendinitis, also known as jumper's knee, is inflammation of the tendon connecting the kneecap to the shinbone, often due to repetitive stress or jumping.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen quadriceps and hamstrings:** Build strength in the muscles around the knee to support the patellar tendon.
- **Proper technique:** Use proper techniques to reduce the impact on the knees during play.
- **Warm-up and stretch:** Ensure you warm up thoroughly and stretch your legs before playing.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the knee and apply ice to reduce inflammation.
- **Anti-inflammatory medications:** Over-the-counter medications can help manage pain and inflammation. Be sure to check with your healthcare provider before starting taking any new medication.
- **Physical Therapy:** A physical therapist can provide exercises to strengthen the muscles and improve flexibility.

Groin Strains

Groin strains involve tearing or overstretching the muscles on the inner thigh, usually from sudden lateral movements or stretching.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen adductors:** Incorporate exercises that strengthen the adductor muscles of the inner thigh.
- **Stretch regularly:** Perform regular stretches for the groin and inner thigh muscles.
- **Warm-up:** Perform a thorough warm-up, including dynamic stretches that target the groin area.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the affected area and apply ice to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Gentle stretching:** Gradually incorporate gentle stretches to restore flexibility as healing progresses.
- **Physical therapy:** Engage in a rehabilitation program to strengthen the groin muscles and prevent recurrence.

Achilles Tendinitis

Achilles tendinitis is inflammation of the Achilles tendon, the large tendon at the back of the ankle, often from repetitive stress or sudden increases in activity.

How to Help Prevent It

- **Strengthen calves:** Perform exercises to strengthen the calf muscles and the Achilles tendon.
- **Gradual progression:** Increase activity levels gradually to avoid overloading the tendon.
- **Proper footwear:** Wear shoes with good arch support and cushioning.

Treatment Options

- **Rest and ice:** Rest the Achilles tendon and apply ice to reduce swelling and pain.
- **Stretch and strengthen:** Once acute pain subsides, engage in stretching and strengthening exercises for the calf and Achilles tendon.
- **Physical therapy:** A physical therapist can help with a rehabilitation program tailored to your needs.