

Athletic Injury Prevention

For Parents

Remember, Your Child Is *Still a Child*

It is important to remember that **your child is not simply a smaller version of an adult**. Your child's muscles, tendons, ligament, and bones are still developing. Because of this:

- *Overuse injuries*, such as tendon inflammation and stress fractures, can happen with too much throwing or running, especially without proper rest and recovery.
- *Growth plate injuries* are also a concern. They can appear as ligaments sprains or muscle strains, and can affect bone growth if not treated.

Athletic Injuries Can Be Prevented

Here are some simple ways to keep your child healthy and safe.

- Get your child a **preseason medical examination by a licensed physician** to make sure he or she is healthy enough to play sports.
- Make sure your child has the **required protective gear** for his or her sport. Your child's coach or athletic trainer can help you make sure that the gear fits properly on your child.
- Be sure that your child is getting **enough rest** between practices, games, and sport seasons so that his or her body can properly recover.
- Make sure your child is **drinking enough liquids** before **AND** after practices or games, especially when it is hot outside.
- **Children develop and mature at different rates**. It is recommended that youth athletes are matched up based on skill level and size instead of age.
- It is important that your child gets the **proper medical attention following an injury** to rule out a more serious injury or condition. In children, sometimes what seems like a minor athletic injury can really be a fracture or growth plate injury.