

Injury Self-Care

Be patient and take the necessary steps to heal the injury. Use the downtime to learn and rethink your training strategy. When you resume activity, start slowly at a low level of intensity and work your way back up to your pre-injury level.

Consult a doctor if:

- there is an inability to move injured part through a normal range of motion
- there is a reluctance to place any weight upon it
- there is severe and persisting pain
- there is redness and inflammation
- the injury does not appear to be healing

Remember . . .

The most effective treatment for all athletic injuries is prevention. It is virtually impossible to be totally immune from being hurt in exercise and sport participation.

However, your best prevention comes from proper training techniques, listening to your body, good common sense, and



your body, good common sense.

CU Healthy

HCS wants to CU Healthy! The Health Promotion Team at HCS tries to achieve this

through our:

- Resource Centre
- Student Peer Interns
- Health Promotion Advisory Committee
- Website (carleton.ca/health)
- Facebook page
- Newsletters, class presentations, workshops and more . . .

The Health Promotion Team promotes healthy lifestyles and wellness and can provide you with information about stress, colds, nutrition, sexuality, alcohol, etc. Contact the Resource Centre for more information at 613-520-2600 ext. 6544 or cu_healthy@carleton.ca.



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Injuries

There are two basic types of injuries: acute, single event injuries that require immediate attention; and chronic, overuse injuries which slowly and gradually become worse. Due to their nature most chronic injuries can be avoided. Chronic injuries are caused by such factors such as:

- Improper training, such as neglecting to warm up or cool down properly, or trying to increase exercise intensity too rapidly.
- Imbalance of strength or flexibility of one side of the body over the other.
- Failure to use proper equipment (eg. properly fitted shoes) or hazardous conditions for your activity.
- Improper exercise technique, especially in activities with repetitive movements.

Nearly two-thirds of all sports injuries are related to overuse. It is very important to know the difference between normal **discomfort** associated with exercise and **pain** which signals injury.

Warm-up and Cool Down

An effective warm-up reduces the risk of injury by increasing tissue elasticity and the efficiency of muscular contractions by increasing the blood flow.

Warm-up can occur with low intensity aerobic exercise, such as walking, which begins with a gradual pace and continues for approximately five minutes.

Proper stretching performed after a sufficient warm-up helps to increase muscle length and allows for greater range of motion in the joints. This helps prevent the risk of injury, muscle spasms

and/or soreness, and stress on the connective tissue. Slow, sustained stretching causes muscles to relax and lengthen. Some helpful hints include:

- Stretch slowly (don't bounce).
- Hold the stretch approximately 15 seconds.
- Exhale slowly as you stretch.
- Stretch to the point of tension - not pain.
- Stretch muscles on both sides of the joint as well as all areas of the body.

Cooling down after a workout allows your body to return to its pre-exercise level of activity. It also prevents excess blood from accumulating in the large muscle groups, which may cause dizziness or nausea. Perform an aerobic activity slowly for a few minutes and then follow with some stretching. This will decrease the discomfort and tissue trauma from the workout and improve flexibility.

Weight Training

Equally train opposing muscle groups around a joint (i.e. back as well as chest; hamstrings as well as quadriceps). This helps support and strengthen the joint and reduces the risk of injury.

Some factors which are important in preventing injury include allowing adequate muscle recovery time of at least 24 hours, alternating upper and lower body workouts and/or alternating heavy and light workouts. Heavy weight training is known to cause microtrauma (small tears) in muscle and connective tissue. Sufficient recovery time allows for tissue healing, muscle energy (glycogen) replacement, and body fluid replenishment. Adequate stretching also appears to be effective in the relief of muscle soreness.



Symptoms of Overtraining

Athletes often tend to overestimate their abilities and start, or try to maintain, too strenuous a level of exercise for their fitness. Overtraining and injury are often the result. The following is a partial list of symptoms of overtraining. Occurrence of any one or more of these symptoms may indicate the need to give your body a rest:

- Apathy towards your workouts
- Chronic fatigue
- Irritability
- Insomnia
- Elevated resting heart rate
- Chronic muscle or joint pain
- Lack of size or strength gains



R.I.C.E. Principle

Do Not Ignore An Injury! Apply the RICE principle. Prompt treatment is the key to recovery.

Rest the injured area. Continued stress can make the problem worse.

Ice the injured area as soon as possible; this will slow the swelling and act as an anesthetic. Place ice pack on the area for 15 minutes and thereafter every 1 1/2 to 2 hours for a 20 minute period. This is especially important in the first 24-36 hrs.

Compress the injured area with an elastic bandage to slow swelling - taking care to not cut off circulation. Wrap from the point furthest from the heart towards heart e.g. toes towards knees. Remove and reapply tensor bandage every 4 hrs.

Elevate the injured area above the heart; this helps to control swelling by preventing excess blood and other body fluids from accumulating in the area.