

HOW ATHLETIC TRAINERS ASSESS, TREAT & MANAGE



KNEE INJURIES



Knee injuries are some of the most common injuries in sports, particularly within the adolescent population.

As athletes grow, they need to strengthen the musculature in their lower body, hips and core to protect their knees from injury. Acute injuries, such as ligament ruptures, typically occur due to mechanisms such as a direct blow, twisting or falling on the knee. Overuse injuries like tendinitis are chronic conditions that occur commonly in adolescent athletes as growth occurs; additional stress on the knee joint due to repetitive motions leads to irritation of the tendon and knee structures.

HOW CAN AN ATHLETIC TRAINER HELP?



Athletic trainers can respond quickly to acute injuries to evaluate and determine if the athlete is safe to be moved, bear weight on their leg, and work with athletes through the initial phases of treatment and rehabilitation by working on decreasing pain and swelling, and strengthening the surrounding structures.

Chronic injuries can restrict athletes play significantly during the season. Athletic trainers work with to provide injury prevention training as well as activity modification.

Once symptoms have resolved and athlete has been cleared to begin activity, athlete will begin the return-to-play protocol supervised by the Athletic Trainer.



When to seek further treatment...



When serious ligament injuries occur and chronic injuries need additional rest and attention, physical therapists work with athletes to decrease pain and get them through their recovery.

Together AT and PT create treatment and rehabilitation plans to address not only the initial injury but also how to prevent further injury.

COMMON KNEE INJURIES

ACL Injury (tears, sprains)

An ACL injury is a tear of the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL), one of four ligaments that connect your shinbone to your thighbone. An ACL injury is particularly common in people who play basketball, soccer or other sports that require sudden changes in direction.

Fractures

The bones of the knee, including the kneecap (patella), can be broken during falls or auto accidents. Also, people whose bones have been weakened by osteoporosis can sometimes sustain a knee fracture simply by stepping wrong.

Torn Meniscus

The meniscus is the tough, rubbery cartilage that acts as a shock absorber between your shinbone and thighbone. It can be torn if you suddenly twist your knee while bearing weight on it.

Knee Bursitis

Some knee injuries cause inflammation in the bursae, the small sacs of fluid that cushion the outside of your knee joint so that tendons and ligaments glide smoothly over the joint.



Patellar Tendinitis

Tendinitis causes irritation and inflammation of one or more tendons — the thick, fibrous tissues that attach muscles to bones. This inflammation can happen when there's an injury to the patellar tendon, which runs from the kneecap (patella) to the shinbone and allows you to kick, run and jump. Runners, skiers, cyclists, and those involved in jumping sports and activities may develop patellar tendinitis.



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