Sports Injury & Mental Health Awareness Webinar

SafeStrongSport Organization

Safe Strong Sport

OUR BODY IS REMARKABLE, ADAPTABLE

Us

Mental

- Unyielding

Physical

- Discipline

Competition

- Opportunity

Sports

- Passion

Striving for athletic success; **Without harming an athlete's health, Mentally and Physically**

PHYSICAL

ACUTE INJURY

Sudden Trauma

ACL Tears, Ankle Sprains, Fractures etc.

Deliberating

May Require Surgery/Physical Therapy

Symptoms

Immediate Pain, Swelling & Loss of Function

Immediate Action

Rest, Ice, Compress, Elevate

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OVERUSE INJURY

Cumulative

Repetitive Stress on Muscles & Joints

Silent but Deadly

Often take months to heal with chance to reoccur

Symptoms

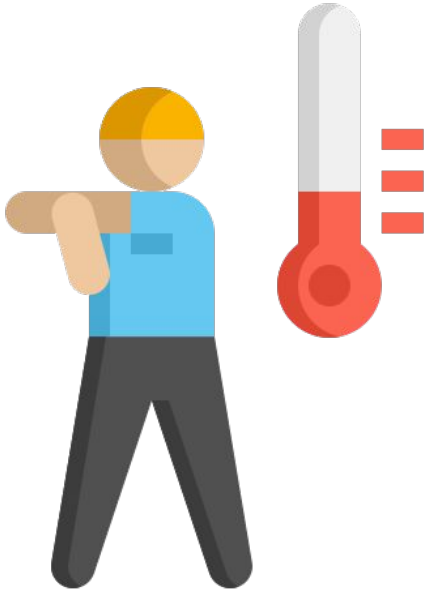
Minor Discomfort in Joints (Wrists, Elbow, Ankle) -> Pain/Swelling

Proactive

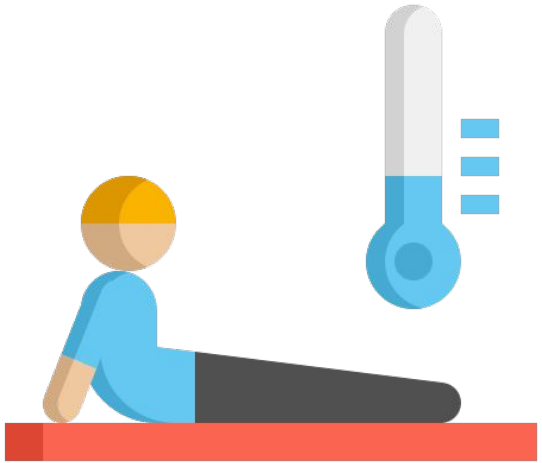
Good Communication with Coaches & Parents

Warm-up

- Increases blood flow
- Prevents Injury & promotes muscle connection
- Warm-up Exercises:
  - Side shuffles
  - High knees
  - Forward/Side lungs



Cool-down



- 5-10 min after a hit
- Removes lactic acid from muscles
- Reduces Soreness
- Cool-down exercises:
  - Butterfly
  - Touch your toes
  - Child's Pose

VOLLEY BALL

FORM MATTERS

- Lower chance of Injury
- Sustainability
- Improved Performance

COMMON MISTAKES

- The "Straight-Leg" Landing
- Under-Net Penetration (The "Center Line" Violation)
- "Dropping the Elbow" During a Spike
- Overusing the "Jump Serve"

DEVELOPING GOOD FORM

- Listening to Coaches
- Discipline
- Prioritize Big Muscles

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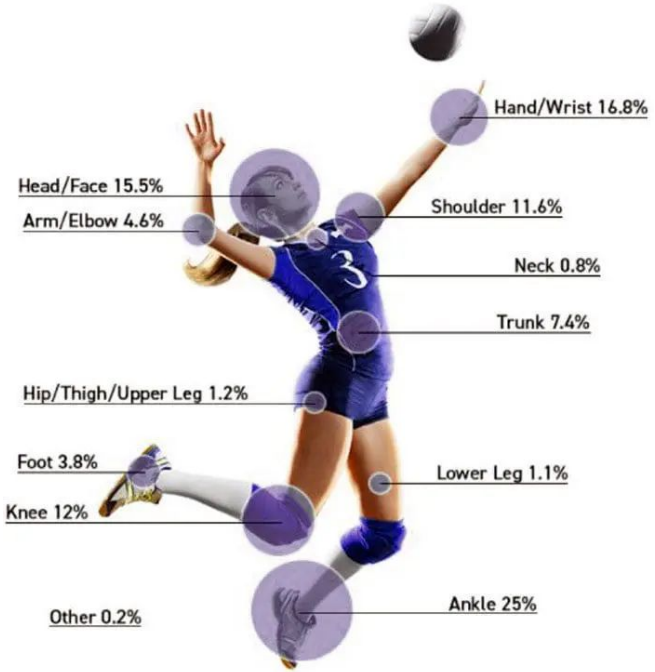
Common injuries

- Most volleyball injuries occur at the net or during rapid defensive transitions.
  - **Jumper's Knee (Patellar Tendonitis):** Chronic pain below the kneecap from repetitive jumping on hard courts.
  - **Ankle Sprains:** The most common acute injury, often from landing on a teammate's or opponent's foot at the center line.
  - **Rotator Cuff Tendonitis:** From the high-volume, high-velocity "snap" of spiking and serving.
  - **Finger Sprains/Dislocations:** "Jammed" fingers from blocking or improper setting technique.
  - **Lower Back Pain:** Caused by the repetitive arching of the spine during jump serves and attacks.

Mastering the Vertical Landing

- Most non-contact ACL tears happen during the landing phase of a block or spike.
  - **Soft Landings:** Athletes must land on the balls of the feet and immediately "hinge" at the hips and knees to absorb impact.
  - **The "No-Drift" Rule:** Train players to jump vertically. Drifting forward increases the risk of crossing the center line and causing ankle injuries.
  - **Symmetry:** Aim to land on both feet simultaneously whenever possible to distribute the force of 4–5x body weight.



Dynamic Warm-Up

- Static stretching before a game reduces jump height. Use these active movements instead:
  - **Glute Bridges:** To "turn on" the muscles that protect the knees.
  - **Lateral Lunges:** To prepare the adductors for rapid side-to-side defensive movements.
  - **Band Pull-Aparts:** To activate the posterior deltoids and rotators.
  - **Carioca & Shuffles:** To prime the ankles for court movement.

Strengthening the "Core & Floor"

- Preventive strength training is the best insurance policy.
  - **The "Nordic" Drop:** To strengthen the hamstrings, which act as a secondary stabilizer for the ACL.
  - **Plank Variations:** To build the "anti-extension" strength needed to protect the lower back during overhead hits.
  - **Single-Leg Balance:** Using foam pads to improve proprioception (the brain's awareness of ankle position).

Equipment Check

Equipment & Court Awareness

- **Ankle Bracing:** While controversial, many coaches recommend braces for blockers who are frequently at risk of "center-line" collisions.
- **Knee Pads:** Essential for preventing bursitis and skin infections during floor defense (digging/pancaking).
- **Footwear:** Volleyball-specific shoes provide the lateral "gum-sole" grip needed for hardwood; running shoes are too high-profile and increase ankle-roll risk.
- **The "Sweep":** Always ensure the floor is dry. Sweat spots are the leading cause of "splits" and groin tears.

NUTRITION

CARBOHYDRATES

Break down into glucose, the body's main fuel source

PROTEINS

Build hormones and enzymes and repairs muscles and bones, main contributor to growth

FATS

Give the body energy through calories and help it absorb vitamin A, D, and E

FIBERS

Carbohydrates that cannot be digested; improves digestive system and lowers blood cholesterol

NUTRITION

FATS	20%
CARBS	50%
PROTEINS	30%

This is a rough estimate of general intake, and percentages can vary depending on circumstance.


"In spite of everything, I still believe that people are really good at heart."
—Anne Frank
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MENTAL

WIN

It lies

LOSS

on a thought

RECREATIONAL

- Participation & Inclusivity
- Few Competitive Opportunities
- Less Pressure to Improve

COMPETITIVE

- Build Discipline & Responsibility
- Lead to burnout/Injury
- Pressure to Perform to a Standard

[Chinese Skateboarder Zheng Haohao]

[U.S. gymnast Hezly Rivera]

[U.S. Track Quincy Wilson]

"ELITE"

"The context in which a young person trains and competes, rather than their performance."

(Mountjoy, 2008)

1

performance outcomes > psychosocial development, enjoyment, participation

2

involvement in sports > psychosocial and educational experiences, non-sports relationships

3

explicit/implicit goal of progression to elite, collegiate, or professional sports

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- “free” time spent travelling/practicing
- schoolwork and other extracurriculars
- unnecessary pressure/expectations

DEFINING BURNOUT

- Emotional and Physical exhaustion
- Reduced Level of Accomplishments
- Sport Devaluation

Table 2 Representative Sample Items

Variable	Sample item
Emotional/physical exhaustion	I feel emotionally drained from my swim team participation
Reduced athletic accomplishment	I am not peforming up to my ability in swimming
Sport devaluation	I don't care as much about my swim performance as I used to
Swim commitment	Do you want to keep participating on a swim team?
Benefits	How rewarding is swim team participation?
Costs	To what extent have you experienced costs associated with swimming?
Enjoyment	How fun is swim team participation for you?
Personal investments	How much effort have you put into swimming?
Alternative attractiveness	Compared to swim team participation, there are other things I could do which would be more enjoyable
Social constraints	The people most important to me would be disappointed with me if I were to quit swim team participation
Swim identity	Swimming is the only thing important in my life
Perceived control	I have a say in what I do when participating in swimming

ADVERSE EFFECTS

PHYSICAL

Chronic fatigue, strength and stamina loss, and increased probability of injuries.

AFFECTIVE

Low mood, lack of enthusiasm, and even hostility to the training environment

COGNITIVE

Difficulty concentrating, decreased school performance, and poor sports performance.

THE ONLY **TREATMENT** TO BURNOUT IS **REST**

"RESULTS > EFFORT"

- EXCEEDINGLY high expectations
- OVEREMPHASIS on results
- INAPPROPRIATE pressure to perform

PARENTS, YOU ARE YOUR CHILD'S BIGGEST SUPPORT!

AFTER A LOSS...

- vulnerability
- empathy > logic
- active listening
- feedback with sensitivity

Influence of peers

Social support

- Psychological well-being
- Enjoyment to sport
- Self-worth

Harmful experiences

- Bullying
- Isolation
- Cyberbullying

Universal Injury Prevention Checklist

- **Checklist for Athletes:**
  - Do I warm up and cool down every session?
  - Am I using proper technique?
  - Do I get enough rest?
  - Is my nutrition supporting my activity?
  - Am I wearing the right protective gear?
  - Do I communicate pain or discomfort to my coach/parent?

General Principles of Injury Prevention (All Sports)

- **Warm-up & Cool-down:** Essential for all athletes to prepare muscles and prevent strains.
- **Proper Technique:** Reduces risk of both acute and overuse injuries.
- **Rest & Recovery:** Prevents burnout and chronic injuries.
- **Nutrition & Hydration:** Fuels performance and aids recovery.
- **Protective Equipment:** Helmets, pads, mouthguards, etc.
- **Communication:** Athletes, coaches, and parents should discuss pain or discomfort.

THANK YOU

Q&A