Sports Injury & Mental Health Awareness Webinar

SafeStrongSport Organization

Safe Strong Sport

OUR BODY IS REMARKABLE, ADAPTABLE

Us

Mental

- Unyielding

Physical

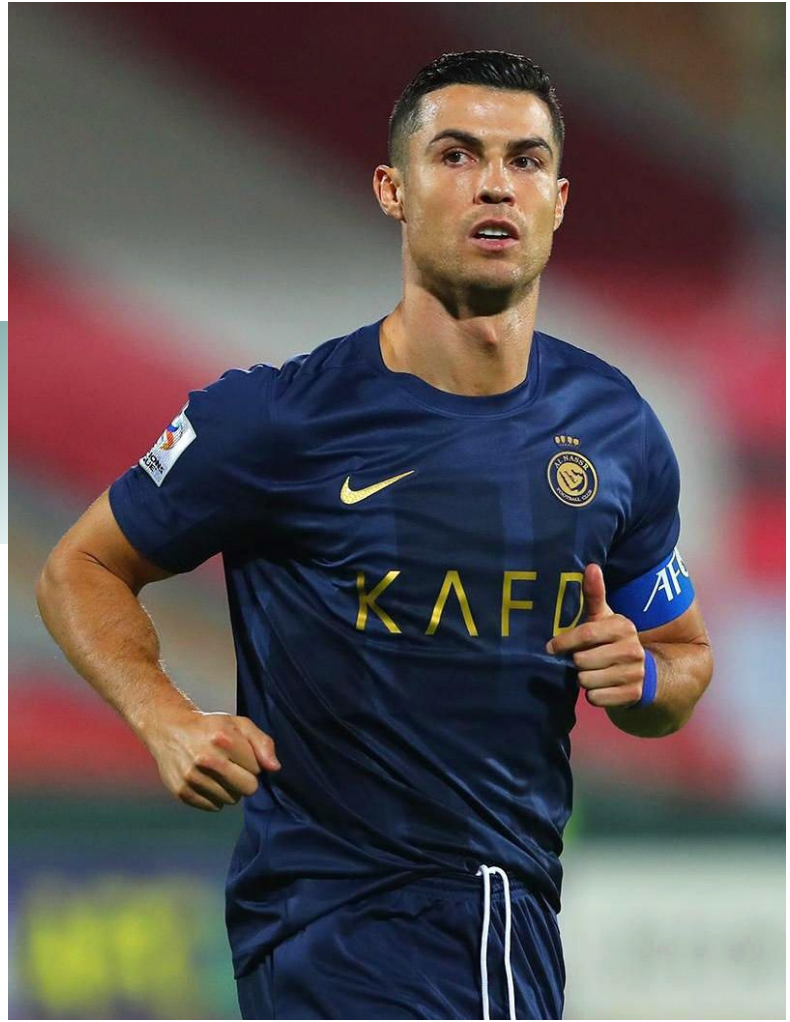
- Discipline

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

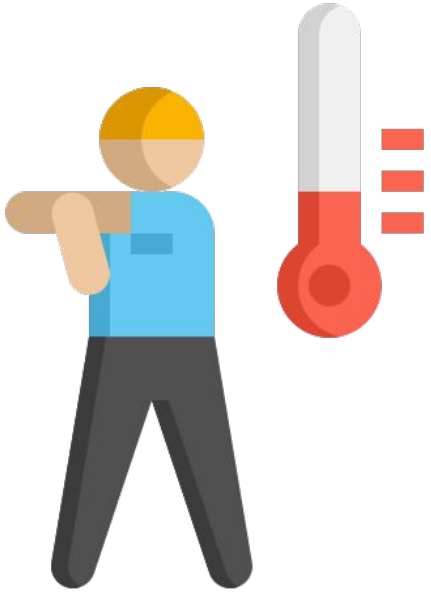
Minor Discomfort in Joints (Wrists, Elbow, Ankle) -> Pain/Swelling

Proactive

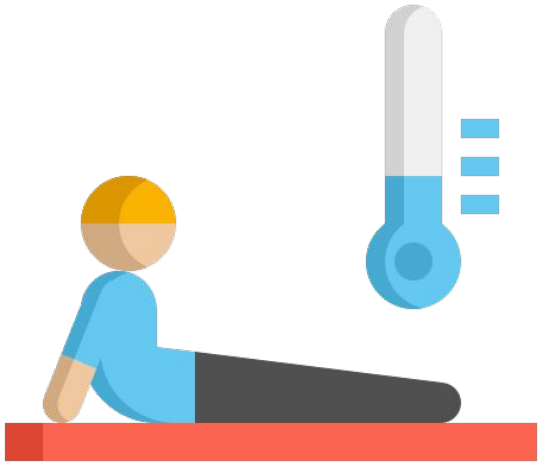
Good Communication with Coaches & Parents

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

SOCCER

FORM MATTERS

- Lower chance of Injury
- Sustainability
- Improved Performance

COMMON MISTAKES

- poor landing mechanics,
- sudden changes in direction,
- inadequate stretching/conditioning
- Poor defensive positioning

DEVELOPING GOOD FORM

- Listening to Coaches
- Discipline
- Prioritize Big Muscles

Common Injuries

- Soccer injuries are predominantly lower-limb focused.
  - Hamstring Strains: Often occur during maximal sprints or over-extending for a ball.
  - Ankle Sprains: Resulting from "rolling" the ankle on uneven turf or during tackles.
  - ACL Tears: Usually non-contact; caused by sudden pivoting or poor landing.
  - Groin Pulls (Adductor Strains): From repetitive side-foot passing and change of direction.
  - Concussions: From head-to-head contact or improper heading technique.

Mastering the Pivot & Landing

- Non-contact knee injuries often happen because of "Knee Valgus" (knees caving inward).
  - Soft Landings: Train players to land on the balls of their feet with hips, knees, and ankles slightly bent.
  - The Pivot: Teach "stepping into the turn" rather than planting the foot and twisting the upper body.
  - Alignment: The knee should always track over the second toe, never collapsing toward the midline.

Warm Up

- The gold standard in soccer science. This 20-minute routine has been proven to reduce injuries by up to 50%.
  - **Part 1: Running Exercises:** Slow speed, contact with partner, and "circling" maneuvers.
  - **Part 2: Strength, Plyometrics & Balance:** Focus on core stability, eccentric hamstring strength (Nordic curls), and single-leg balance.
  - **Part 3: High-Speed Running:** Planting, cutting, and bounding to prime the nervous system for match intensity.

Strengthen muscle

- To protect the joints, we must strengthen the muscles that stabilize them.
  - **Nordic Hamstring Curls:** The "vaccine" for hamstring tears. Focuses on the lengthening phase of the muscle.
  - **Copenhagen Planks:** Specifically targets the groin/adductors to prevent pulls during kicking.
  - **Glute Medius Work:** Lateral band walks help keep the pelvis stable during one-legged movements (running/kicking).

Equipment Check

Equipment & Court Safety

- **The Right Studs:** Using "Soft Ground" (metal) studs on hard turf increases the risk of the foot getting "stuck," leading to knee tears. Match the cleat to the surface.
- **Shin Guards:** Must be worn properly (covering the lower 1/3 of the tibia) during both practice and games.
- **Hydration & Electrolytes:** Muscle fatigue is a precursor to injury. A tired muscle cannot stabilize a joint as effectively.
- **Check the Pitch:** Scan for holes, sprinklers, or debris before the match starts.

Recovery

- **Active Cool Down:** 10 minutes of low-intensity jogging/walking to flush metabolic waste.
- **Refuel Window:** Consume protein and carbs within 30–60 minutes to jumpstart tissue repair.
- **Sleep Hygiene:** 8+ hours is the most effective "supplement" for injury prevention.
- **Monitor Load:** Use "RPE" (Rate of Perceived Exertion) to track how hard players feel they worked, preventing overtraining.

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