

Prevention and Care of Soccer Injuries

- I. Basic Concepts
- The first line of defense in the treatment of soccer injuries is to prevent them. This is accomplished by a well organized program, a proper warm-up, and adherence to the Laws of the Game. **ALWAYS ERR ON THE SIDE OF CAUTION!**
 - Proper equipment (shin guards, appropriate/tied shoes, no jewelry, appropriate uniform)
 - Upkeep and monitoring of playing surface
 - Ample water supply and breaks.
 - Prior knowledge of existing conditions (asthma, sprains, etc.)
 - If a player is injured, inform parents and follow-up within 48 hours.
 - Keep a First-Aid kit accessible
 - Have medical release forms, information forms and treatment forms signed by parents for each player.

- II. Basic First Aid Information
- R.I.C.E.**-Rest, Ice, Compression, Elevation
 - Strains are the stretching of tendon or muscle fibers, recommended treatment: **R.I.C.E.**
 - Sprains are the stretching of ligaments, recommended treatment: R.I.C.E.
 - Dislocations and Fractures involve deformation or breaking of bones, recommended treatment: seek medical treatment **Immediately.**
 - Cramps are a result of an insufficient flow of blood to the muscle and can be caused by a blow to the muscle, insufficient consumption of fluids, poor diet or fatigue. Recommended treatment: massage and stretch
 - Heat Exhaustion is exhibited by signs of weakness, pale skin, cold and clammy skin, pupils slightly dilated, and a rapid pulse. Recommended treatment: remove from the game immediately, lie down in a cool or shaded area, give plenty of liquids and if improvement is minimal, should see a doctor.

Prevention and Care of Injuries, continued

-Heat Stroke is a life-threatening situation where the body has lost a significant amount of fluid and salt. Exhibited by high body temperature, hot to the touch, dry and flushed skin, strong rapid pulse, and player is dizzy and weak. Recommended treatment: give a cold bath (pouring ice water over body) and give plenty of cold fluids, get to medical care immediately.

-Blisters are often caused by poor fitting footwear, usually shoes that are too big (so the

player can "grow into them") and/or wet, causing excessive rubbing against the skin. Recommended treatment: apply adhesive tape to the reddened area and do not use gauze (the sore will rub against the tape rather than the skin.)

-Concussions are caused by a blow to the head and are mild bruising of brain tissue. Recommended treatment: get player checked immediately by a physician.

- II. Rules of thumb when handling injuries
- When an accident occurs, stop all activity.
 - Look for any deformity, discoloration, bleeding or shock.
 - Ask questions. Have the player explain where it hurts.
 - Stay calm, inspire confidence and reassurance in the injured player
 - Don't move the player if the injury looks serious.
 - Seek professional help when appropriate

Team Administration and Risk Management

Team administration includes more than just the players. The real "Team" includes the players, parents, and coaches. As the coach your role is to organize and involve the parents by giving as many of them as possible a role. They can be responsible for the team phone tree, uniforms, water, transportation, etc. It is important to have a meeting at the start of the season to assign these roles as well as to communicate a philosophy and determine all developmental goals for the season. With this accomplished the coach can concentrate on coaching.

Risk Management is a program to promote health, safety and protection of the children in the game of soccer. It is important to designate one person involved in your association to be responsible for managing risk as well as communicating with the state association in all matters regarding the safety of the kids. Accepting a coaching position means accepting responsibilities. Here are a few important points to remember:

- Never** leave a player alone after training or games.
 - Be certain that players depart with their parents or designated individuals.
 - Avoid being left alone with players who are not your children.
- Goals-Are they safe? They should be anchored or weighted down!!!
 - Weather conditions