



NEWSLETTER

February 15th - February 28th



Preventing ACL Injuries

Did you know that each year over 100,000 Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) repairs are required each year in the US? More alarming is that the majority of these problems occur in females 15-25 years old.

So what is the ACL? It is a ligament found inside the center of the knee joint, connecting the femur to the tibia, and its job is to provide stabilization at the knee. Any sport that causes a lot of stress on the knee, especially accompanied by twisting motions, can damage the ligament, even to the point in which surgery is required.

So how do ACL injuries occur? Most ACL injuries are non-contact, meaning that they occur from an athlete's own movement, rather than an impact or collision. High risk factors include: muscle imbalance the thigh, an inappropriate knee position when cutting to the side or landing, poor core strength, poor flexibility, playing high level sports without preparation, and under-emphasis on a strength and conditioning program.

So what can I do to prevent injury? First you must identify the risk. Athletes young and old in sports that require a great deal of agility and explosive (jumping/running) power are at higher risk for this injury. You can also observe your athletes movement. Ask them to jump off a step 12-18 inches tall, and observe their knees. If their knees stay locked and straight, or if they buckle inward past the inward edge of the foot, then they are at a greatly increased risk of sustaining an ACL injury. After the risk is identified, it is highly recommended to seek out additional strength and conditioning training in order to correct any muscular or flexibility imbalances. Such training can help prevent ACL and other injuries while also improving overall athletic performance. Northern Rehab offers a variety of sport-specific athletic training for almost every skill level that will help your athlete through injury prevention and athletic development.

Don't let these exercise myths derail your New Year's fitness resolutions:



- **Myth: Strength training will make me “bulk up.”**

Some women avoid weight training because they don't want to become overly muscular. Based upon research, most women don't have to worry about this because even with strength training, they do not have the hormones necessary to put on a lot of muscle. Everyone should strength train in order to help in weight maintenance, as well as injury prevention.

- **Myth: If I can't work out often enough, I might as well not work out at all.**

The general rule for weight loss is to do cardio 4-5 days per week for at least 30 minutes a session, as well as strength training 2-3 days per week. Some people believe that if they can't exercise that much, that it's not worth exercising at all. This simply isn't the case, as any exercise is better than no exercise, even if it is only a daily 15 minute walk. While you shouldn't expect the same strengthening or weight loss, even modest physical activity is proven to reduce stress and improve general health.

The Sycamore Chamber of Commerce invites you to attend "Creating a Healthy Workplace," hosted by the Kishwaukee Women's Network and presented by Northern Rehab's Melissa Payne. Tickets are only \$15 per guest. RSVP by Monday, January 18th to 895-3456 or dbreunlin@sycamorechamber.com.