



connections
PHYSICAL THERAPY

NEWSLETTER

HOW YOU CAN AVOID SURGERY AFTER A SPORTS INJURY



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HOW YOU CAN AVOID SURGERY AFTER A SPORTS INJURY



Exercise is an important part of a healthy lifestyle. For many people, playing sports is a fun way to burn extra calories, socialize, and get fit. Unfortunately, this also means the occasional sports injury or a flare-up of an old injury or condition.

You don't have to be a professional or even an amateur athlete to suffer a sports injury. In fact, many times, those most susceptible to sports injuries are people who have just started exercising or participate on a recreational level. Sports injuries in this article will be defined as injuries to the musculoskeletal system, including muscles, bones and tissues such as cartilage. The most common sports injuries include:

SPRAINS: A sprain occurs when the connective tissue that joins the end of the bone with another is stretched or torn. Those connective tissues are known as ligaments. Sprains are caused by trauma such as a fall or blow to the body that knocks a joint out of position. Ankles, knees and wrists are most vulnerable to sprains. However, back, neck and shoulder sprains are very common too.

STRAINS: A strain occurs when a muscle or tendon is pulled, torn or twisted. Strains are non-contact injuries, such as those that occur from overstretching. A common example of a strain is a muscle spasm. A back or neck strain is a very common injury treated in physical therapy.

KNEE INJURIES: According to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, the knee is the most commonly injured joint. Orthopedic surgeons see more than 5.5 million people annually for knee injuries, which can include runner's knee (pain or tenderness close to the knee cap at the front side of the knee), tendonitis

and iliotibial band syndrome (pain on the outer side of the knee). Severe knee injuries often include bone bruises or damage to the cartilage or ligaments.

SHIN SPLINTS: Shin splints occur when there is pain along the large bone in the front of the lower leg, known as the tibia or shin bone. Shin splints most commonly occur in runners, especially those who are just starting a running program. This is usually due to poor alignment of the body, or weakness in the leg muscles.

The team at Connections Physical Therapy can treat many orthopedic and repetitive motion injuries without the need for invasive surgeries or medications. In fact, most doctors have their patients try physical therapy first before recommending any other procedures.

The licensed physical therapists and physical therapist assistants at Connections Physical Therapy can customize a program that addresses the weakness of your particular musculoskeletal system, allowing you to recover quickly and remain active. Even if you have an old injury, it is important to have it evaluated by our physical therapists to prevent long-term damage like arthritis. If you have sports or orthopedic injuries like tendonitis, arthritis, a stress fracture or low back pain, our therapists can design a treatment plan to promote improved function, wellness and minimize the risk of re-injury.

**DISCOVER HOW OUR TEAM OF SPECIALISTS AT
CONNECTIONS PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN GET
YOU MOVING PAIN-FREE AGAIN!**

CALL TODAY TO FEEL NORMAL AGAIN!



DON'T LET PAIN SIDELINE YOU

There is nothing more exciting than taking on a new challenge, sport or activity. For most of us, the thrill of accomplishing a physical goal is what we live for. However, are you prepared for it? The term "weekend warrior" means a person who doesn't really train for what they are doing; they just go out and do it on the weekend.

How do most injuries occur? Most sports injuries occur from ill-prepared individuals who just jump into the activity without first increasing their strength, endurance and flexibility. Your muscles, tendons, ligaments and other tissues need to be warmed up to work properly. They take enormous strain during running and sports activities. Therefore, if they are not in top condition, they are more prone to injury.

Injuries increase as you age. If you think back to when you were in your late teens, you could go into a full sprint no problem, take a flying leap and do a whole lot without the slightest thought about it. As you get older, your tissues become less elastic and in fact a little "drier." When your muscle, tendon and ligament tissues

have enough water, they are supple and stretchy, allowing you to do a lot of activities. Keep yourself hydrated and stretch often to maintain elasticity in your muscles.

Before and after. Knowing the right exercises to prepare for fitness activities is key. Our physical therapy experts have years of experience rehabilitating people after injuries and returning them pain-free to the activities they enjoy. What some people might not know is that physical therapists put specific exercise plans together based on your needs to prevent injury. If you do start to experience pain with activities, Connections Physical Therapy can get you back to enjoying your activities pain-free. Call today to learn more about how our programs can help you feel great!

DISCOVER HOW OUR TEAM OF SPECIALISTS CAN GET YOU MOVING PAIN-FREE AGAIN! GO ONLINE OR CALL US TO SCHEDULE AN APPOINTMENT TODAY.

EXERCISE ESSENTIALS

ANKLE SPRAINS

Suffering from recurring ankle sprains? Try this balance and core exercise. The single leg anti-rotation punch challenges the ankle you're balancing on to strengthen it up while activating your core. Stand perpendicular to your resistance and make sure it's challenging enough to give you a little pull to the side. Raise up your outer foot and balance there. While holding this slowly move your hands from your chest to an outstretched position as shown, resisting rotation by engaging your core. Repeat for 30 seconds and then switch sides.



WE'RE STAYING SAFE!

The staff at Connections Physical Therapy is focused on keeping you healthy and our equipment and facilities clean. To prevent the spread of COVID-19, we are taking these precautions:



ONE PATIENT TO ONE THERAPIST ONLY IN THE CLINIC



NO DOUBLE BOOKING OR PATIENT OVERLAP



THERAPISTS PROVIDED TIME TO CLEAN ALL SURFACES AND EQUIPMENT BETWEEN PATIENTS.

OUR TEAM IN THE COMMUNITY!



Dr. Tracy Moore from our Pepperell clinic had a great time representing Connections Physical Therapy at Pepperell's Annual Safety Day at Albert Harris Center! Pepperell's Safety Day had representatives from the Police and Fire department assisting with programs, such as the Yellow Dot, File of Life, and Safe Return Project. Tracy was able to share her knowledge and present a home fall prevention checklist to members of the community to make sure they are always staying safe!

STAFF SPOTLIGHT



**AMANDA LEONE, PT,
DPT, OCS, CSCS**

Dr. Amanda Leone joined Connections Physical Therapy in the fall of 2018. Amanda graduated from Northeastern University in 2013 with her doctorate, and after 2 years of practicing, she sat for the Orthopedic Clinical Specialist certification exam, becoming recognized as a specialist in 2016. This difficult

exam sets apart physical therapists who have attained advanced knowledge and skills in orthopedics as experts, and as of 2018 there were only 309 in the entire state of Massachusetts.

Amanda practices in Acton, seeing patients of all ages and backgrounds, but has a special passion for athletes. Amanda is also a certified strength and conditioning specialist, and focuses heavily on injury prevention. Amanda has created and implemented an ACL Injury prevention program for young athletes to teach them how to train their bodies appropriately while in sport to avoid potentially season ending injuries, as well as create lifelong healthy habits. She also specializes in Concussion treatments, Vestibular Rehab, and TMJ disorders.

Outside of the clinic, Amanda continues to play soccer in the Easter Mass Women's Soccer League, and is an avid hiker. Her happy place is in the mountains, and you will most likely find her on the trails in the White Mountains on any given weekend. Amanda also loves traveling, playing with her nieces and nephews, and reading.

HEALTHY RECIPE

ARUGULA, GRAPE, AND SUNFLOWER SEED SALAD



INGREDIENTS:

- 3 tablespoons red wine vinegar
- 1 teaspoon honey
- 1 teaspoon maple syrup
- 1/2 teaspoon stone-ground mustard
- 2 teaspoons grapeseed oil
- 7 cups loosely packed baby arugula
- 2 cups red grapes, halved
- 2 tablespoons toasted sunflower seed
- 1 teaspoon chopped fresh thyme
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon ground black pepper

DIRECTIONS: Combine vinegar, honey, syrup, and mustard in a small bowl. Gradually add oil, stirring with a whisk. Combine arugula, grapes, seeds, and thyme in a large bowl. Drizzle vinegar mixture over arugula; sprinkle with salt and pepper. Toss gently to coat.

NEW PHYSICAL THERAPIST SPOTLIGHT



**NICOLE SIMMONDS, PT,
DPT, NCS**

We welcome our new physical therapist Nicole Simmonds who is seeing patients in our Worcester clinic. Nicole graduated from Springfield College with her Bachelor of Science in Health Science in 2011 and continued on to receive her Doctorate in Physical Therapy. Nicole completed a one year neuro residency during which she worked in inpatient

and outpatient settings with various neurologic conditions including Multiple Sclerosis, Parkinson's, vestibular dysfunction, brain injury, spinal cord injury and stroke. She then became a board certified Neurologic Clinical Specialist in 2017. Outside of work, Nicole enjoys practicing meditation and being outdoors hiking or biking to explore new areas of the country. We are very happy that Nicole joined our team at Connections!



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