

Press Release

For Immediate Release

August 8, 2011

Contact

Vincent Pierri, Manager, Public Affairs
847-990-5295
847-997-6294, cell
Vincent.pierri@advocatehealth.com

Advocate Condell affiliated orthopedic surgeon says student athletes can avoid some injuries

Libertyville—Heading into the new school year, parents have plenty of concerns about their kids. Getting hurt on the playing field might be on top of the list for many. But some injuries may be avoidable says Advocate Condell Medical Center affiliated physician [Mark Neault, M.D.](#)

According to the Centers for Disease Control more than seven million students participate in high school sports annually. High school athletes accounted for an estimated two million injuries, 500,000 doctor visits, and 30,000 hospitalizations in 2006. Football had the highest injury rate, followed by wrestling and soccer.

Dr. Neault says many of the injuries he sees are preventable. The orthopedic surgeon said while bruises and broken bones are common, he sees dozens of other unnecessary injuries.

Dr. Neault has three suggestions for student athletes. They need to engage in preseason conditioning, avoid overuse of muscles, joints and tendons, and have the right equipment.

As team physician for two Lake County area high schools, Dr. Neault says entering the sports season unprepared is asking for trouble. It's essential to work out regularly in the off season.

“The biggest mistake kids make is they stay active during the school year and play their sports but when summer comes their activity level changes and they may not stay conditioned like they should,” Dr. Neault said. “They eat junk food and get lax on flexibility and training. When they come back to school they're really out of shape. You can't go from doing nothing to attending two-a-day practices in 90 degree weather without expecting to see some sort of injury.”

It's great when kids focus on becoming the best in their chosen sport, but Dr. Neault says variety may be a key preventer of injury.

“We see the obvious sprains, strains, and fractures but the reality is that kids are coming to my office with overuse injuries,” Dr. Neault explained. “They have sore knees, pitching elbow, pitching shoulder, heel pain, and tendonitis. Gymnastics, baseball, and cheerleading, are particular sports where we see a lot of overuse.”

He recommends that students mix things up. “It's beneficial for kids to play different sports instead of playing one sport 10 months out of the year. The variety can prevent over-use injuries.”

MORE

801 South Milwaukee Avenue
Libertyville, IL 60048



Inspiring medicine. Changing lives.

There's no magic bullet when it comes to injury prevention but Dr. Neault says parents need to remember two words.

"Good equipment," Dr. Neault said. "Get the equipment that fits properly and functions properly. The helmet needs to be strapped, the mouth guard has to be in the mouth or it doesn't do any good."

Even kids in non-contact sports can be injured by using sub-standard gear. "My office is full of people with foot pain who ran five miles with cheap shoes," Dr. Neault said. "Tennis rackets can't be too heavy or you'll get tennis elbow. I see so many people who get hurt unnecessarily. There is almost always a way to prevent injuries."

Dr. Neault speaks regularly to sports and parent organizations about sports safety. He has offices in Lincolnshire. He can be reached at 847-634-1766.