

## Guidelines for Preventing Common Soccer Injuries

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### Services Offered

- Physiotherapy
- Massage Therapy
- Chiropractic
- Occupational Therapy
- Sport Nutrition
- Strength and Conditioning
- Mental Performance
- Custom Orthotics
- Custom and off-the-shelf Bracing
- Tape and other supplies

### Programs

- Baseline Concussion Testing
- Concussion Injury Management
- Pre-season Sport Screening
- Functional Movement Testing
- Running Assessments
- Pre-season and in-season Sport Conditioning

### Karen Decker

Karen is a Physiotherapist with advanced credentials in Sport Physiotherapy. She works with many recreational and high performance athletes and teams. Karen has attended many games including part of Team Canada at the 2004, 2008 and 2018 Olympic Games and was the Lead Physiotherapist for the 2011 Canada Winter Games. Learn more about Karen at [www.accelphysio.ca](http://www.accelphysio.ca)



## Guidelines for Preventing Common Soccer Injuries

The most common areas injured while playing soccer include the knee, ankle and hip. Common risk factors exist and if managed these injuries are often preventable. Here are some helpful injury prevention guidelines:

- **Warm-up** prior to all soccer training - this involves 5-10 minutes of light running/soccer drills to break a sweat, followed by dynamic stretching (exaggerated soccer related movements to take joints through a full range of motion; often done while moving across the field)
- **Cool-down** after training - this involves 5 minutes of light jogging to walking and 5-10 minutes of static stretching
- Improve **strength** of ankles, knees, hips and the core area with either body weight or resistance training (See FIFA 11<sup>+</sup> exercises, sideways band walks, heel walking)
- Ensure proper **pre-season conditioning** is adequate, and that rest days are provided throughout the season
- Improve **flexibility** by stretching daily (see reverse)
- Improve **proprioception** (awareness of body position) by doing balance exercises each training session and at home (i.e. juggling ball, standing on one foot with eyes closed)
- Ensure **equipment** such as cleats and shin pads are in good condition and fit properly. Shoe selection should depend on foot type and surface of play.
- **Hydrate** properly before, during and after training and competition. Water is best but sports drinks such as Gatorade are also acceptable.
- Manage injuries properly by having them assessed by a professional. Treat all injuries for the first 48 hours with the **R.I.C.E principle** - **Rest**, **Ice** hourly for 15 minutes, **Compress** area with a tensor, **Elevate** area above the heart where possible
- **Concussions** - if managed with proper rest, head injuries resolve quickly. Report any symptoms such as headache, dizziness, nausea, feelings of being tired resulting from head contact or falls to parents and coaches.
- Utilize **recovery methods** for frequent training - proper nutrition/hydration, massage therapy, ice baths/showers, hydrotherapy, stretching, foam rolling, rest/sleep

Contact us if you have any questions, would like for us to join you at the field for more tips or if you would like to book an individual meeting to discuss injury prevention techniques.

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## Injury Management

If you sustain an acute injury, such as a strain or pull, immediately stop activity and use the RICE method of treatment. RICE stands for Rest, Ice, Compression and Elevation.

### R = REST

Rest will prevent further injury and will allow for healing.

### I = ICE

Apply ice immediately to limit swelling. It constricts blood vessels and restricts the bleeding in the injured area. Apply ice for 15 minutes every 3-4 hours per day for the first 48-72 hours.

### C = COMPRESSION

Compression with a tensor bandage, plastic wrap or towel further limits swelling and supports the injured area.

### E = ELEVATION

Elevation uses gravity to minimize swelling in the injured area by reducing blood flow.

It is important to begin RICE as soon as possible after an injury.

See a doctor if pain persists.

Physiotherapy will assist with the healing process and help you to return to play. Healing from injuries can take time.

Start exercising with simple range of motion exercises when the injured area no longer hurts at rest. Over time, you can return to activity at a low intensity and build up to previous levels.

## Stretches



Stand with your feet hip width apart. Place your hands shoulder width apart on the floor. Look at the floor between your feet.

Shift one leg slightly behind you and push your heel down into the floor. Feel a gentle stretch in your calf. Allow the other leg to bend slightly. Hold 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times. Repeat 2 times.



Half kneeling.

Tighten your stomach muscles to keep your back straight. Rotate the heel behind you outwards while pushing your hip forwards. Hold 20-30 secs. - relax.

Repeat 2-3 times



Lying on your back with knees bent. Cross the ankle of the leg to be stretched over the other knee. Put your arms around the thigh as shown.

Bring your thigh towards your stomach. Feel the stretch in your buttock. Hold for 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times.



Stand with your legs crossed and holding on to a support.

Keeping your body, knees and feet straight forward slide your front leg backwards until you can feel the stretching on the outside of your hips and thighs. Hold approx. 20-30 secs. - relax. Repeat with the other leg in the front.

Repeat 2-3 times.



Stand holding on to a support. Bend one knee and take hold of the ankle. Do not lock the knee of the leg you are standing on.

Draw your heel towards your buttock. Tilt your hip forwards so that your knee points towards the floor. Feel the stretch in the front of your thigh. Hold 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times.



Stand with legs astride and straight.

Bend one leg and put your hands on the knee. Bend your leg even more and put more weight on the leg. You will feel stretching on the inside of the thigh on the straight leg. Hold approx. 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times.



Sit on a table with one leg straight in front of you with the heel over the edge and the other leg on the floor (as shown).

Bend your upper body forwards keeping your back straight. Hold approx. 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times.



Stand in a walking position. Bend your elbow and support the forearm against a door frame or corner.

Gently rotate your upper trunk away from the arm until the stretching can be felt in the chest muscles. Stretch approx. 20-30 secs.

Repeat 2-3 times.

## Contact

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