

ELEVATION SPORTS MEDICINE CLINIC

9616 E. ARAPAHOE ROAD. GREEDWOOD VILLAGE CO 80112
Dr. J. Alvarez www.elevation-sportsmed.com 303-521-0130

Sports Injury Disclaimer

A study, which surveyed 3,000 athletes, coaches and parents, found that:

- 42 percent of kids said that they have downplayed or hidden injuries so that they could keep playing.
- 53 percent of coaches said they've felt pressure to put injured players back in the game.
- Almost 1/3 of kids surveyed said it's "normal" to play rough in a game, to "send a message" to the other team.

While this problem in sports has been well-publicized, this new research found that many young athletes are still putting themselves at unnecessary risk by continuing to play "injured".

Safe Kids Worldwide (website) and CDC

What is the best option?

You should consider **stopping** the activity depending upon the severity of the symptoms you are experiencing. If you are feeling typical muscle soreness it is probably fine to continue exercising. But *if you are experiencing pain you should stop the exercise right away*. Do not "push through the pain" of an activity that causes you unnaturally painful discomfort. Continuing a questionable activity during pain only promotes additional bodily harm and potential damage. You should immediately seek, or re-visit your doctor if the injury causes severe soreness, swelling, numbness, or any other type of pain that "just does not seem or feel right" or you can't tolerate any weight on the area; or if the pain or dull ache of an old injury is accompanied by increased swelling, joint abnormality or instability. If you aren't experiencing any of those symptoms, you should be able to treat your injury at home (certainly would help to ask your doctor about home treatments and care). However, if your symptoms increase or worsen, you are encouraged to consult your healthcare provider or other medical professional.

Dr. Alvarez (or another provider) will likely advise you to stop playing for a period of time, should that be warranted. That length of time is variable. It depends on the severity of the injury, the age of the person, the sport at hand and several other factors.

For example, a mild ankle sprain could be 4 –6 weeks rest, recovery, rehab, treatments (RRRT) while a microfracture knee surgery could be 12 months of RRRT before sports / activity can be re-introduced.

If you decide to return to sports / activity too soon, or outside recommendation from your doctor, the injury could get worse, other problems could develop, healing takes longer, permanent injury can set in, early retirement from your sport may have to go in effect.

INITIAL _____

Basic guidelines for your injury:

1. Home Care:

“RICE”

- **REST** stop playing / doing your sport / activity until cleared
- **ICE** 15 minutes over the “hurt” site (make sure there is a layer between your skin and the ice)
- **COMPRESSION** you may need to wrap the area (ace bandage, brace, k-tape, etc...)
- **ELEVATION** for circulation towards the heart and to reduce swelling

2. Listen to your body:

- **If it hurts, DON'T DO IT** (a little soreness is ok and to be expected, but if it's pain that your “gut” tells you to stop, then stop!)

3. Gradually re-introduce the activity:

- It is easy to want to start where you left off. **AVOID THAT IDEA.**
- Start out small, work your way big
- Example: A runner was up to 12 miles a day, then bad knee injury, took 6 weeks off and went through treatments, the day the runner goes back to running, **DO NOT** begin with a 12 mile day. Start out walking briskly for half a mile, then a light jog for half a mile. **THEN STOP.** See how your body responds over the next day or two. If by the second day things went well, add a quarter to half a mile of low intensity a day at a time while you work your way up to longer distances and intensity over time.
- **THERE IS NO HURRY, ONLY SAFETY**

4. Using supports, bracing, taping:

- Your doctor (or trainer) may tape, brace or support the “hurt” and recovering area. This can help you get through the rehab phase and beginning phases of training.
- You may or may not need the “support” indefinitely (some do, some do not, some use the support as needed) This just depends on the nature of your injury and goals. Dr. Alvarez will work with you on this as every case and injury is different, therefore the need can be different.

5. In office treatment / exam / maintenance:

- It is important to follow a care plan to help your body heal properly.
- Every athlete is different and every injury is different, so based on your age, nature of the injury, and other factors, will determine about how long your care will be.
- In office treatments will help you recover quicker and healthier as will any “homework” you will likely be prescribed. **ONE KEY IS TO ALLOW THE “HURT” AREA TO HEAL PROPERLY TO REDUCE FUTURE INJURY.**
- At times there may be more than one provider helping you recover.

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