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The Big Picture

with Dr. Sara Dudley

Sports Injuries

What is the best way of avoiding sports injuries?

The answer is prevention. Prevention does not mean ducking out of a hard tackle in a football match. No, the best prevention is the warm up and warm down process and it is surprising how many sportsmen and women still ignore this vital part of the game.

Why is warming up so important?

When you think about it it's obvious. Imagine that you have just started a football match and you are required to challenge for a ball, the adrenalin has already started to flow with the excitement of the competition and you stretch out your leg to the full.

The muscles, tendons and ligaments are being asked to go from a state of relaxation to a state of full power with no warning in between. This is bound to cause an injury of some kind.

However, if you slowly stretch your muscles, tendons and ligaments over a 10-15 minute period before the match begins they will be in a state of readiness and an injury is far less likely to occur. You will always see professional sportsmen warming up before an event.

How can Chiropractic help when I do experience an injury?

Many sports injuries involve the spine. Spinal injuries can restrict the range of motion, reduce strength, slow reflexes, shorten endurance and decrease performance. When the nervous system is working well, co-ordination is also improved and good co-ordination is vital in all sports.

Is it only contact sports that affect the spine?

Unfortunately the answer is no. We see many golfers who have caused injury to the spine because of the way they twist when taking a shot. We also see gymnasts, cyclists, tennis players, the list is endless. Why? Because it is not always the sport that has caused the injury. Sometimes the injury can be caused by something unrelated to the sport - the sport simply acts as the trigger.

Whatever sport you enjoy, regular spinal check-ups are advisable.

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