Injury Prevention in Adolescent Female Athletes
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**Injuries in Adolescent Athletes**

- Sports are the leading cause of injury in adolescents accounting for >30% of injuries in this population.
- Injuries can lead to decreased sport participation, obesity, and arthritis later in life.
- Injuries can have profound psychosocial consequences for young athletes.
- More than 25% of individuals with injury to a specific knee ligament called the anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) do not return to previous activity levels even after successful surgery and rehab.
- Within 7 years after ACL injury 65% of individuals no longer play soccer.

**Field Hockey Specific**

- In the NCAA from 2004-2009:
  - More than 10,000 injuries
  - Highest overall injury rate during preseason
  - Muscle strains, contusions, sprains, fractures, and concussions are the most common types of injuries
  - 13.1% of injuries resulted in 21+ days of time lost from play
  - 6.2% of injuries result in surgery

**What you can do**

1. **Warm-up**
   - Listen to your coaches and don’t fool around.

2. **Stretch**
   - Stretching after 5-10 minutes of warm-up has the greatest impact on decreasing injury.
   - Both static and dynamic stretching have been shown to be beneficial.
   - In a static stretch, hold for 30 seconds, switch sides, and repeat.

3. **Listen to your body**
   - Use pain as your guide.
   - When you’re supposed to rest actually rest to avoid overuse injuries and burnout.

4. **If you do get injured keep your head up**
   - Many athletes struggle coming back from injuries.
   - Lean on your support systems.

**REFERENCES**

- [https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/NCAA_FieldHockey_Injuries_HiRes.pdf](https://www.ncaa.org/sites/default/files/NCAA_FieldHockey_Injuries_HiRes.pdf)