



METRIFIT FACT SHEET: INJURY PREVENTION



No matter what level of sport you participate in, the threat of injury is probably the greatest fear you have. Even the slightest niggle can severely disrupt your training schedule and prevent you from getting to peak fitness for the big event and there are many tales of athletes missing out on the big day altogether due to injury.

It is a threat that affects everyone, including competitive athletes who are at high risk due to the high intensity of their training and activity. It is a similar fear for leisure athletes, and children are also particularly at risk due to the fact that they are still physically developing.

As a result, everyone wants to reduce or eliminate the threat of injury, and in order to do this, the athlete needs to be aware of the types of injury that can occur and the steps required to reduce the risk.

WHAT ARE THE MOST COMMON SPORTS INJURIES?

The article [The Five Most Common Sports Injuries](#) lists the injuries that occur most often among athletes:

Strains and Sprains. These are the most common type of sports injury by far, and can occur in almost any type of physical activity.

Knee Injuries. Every year over 5 million people visit orthopaedic surgeons for knee related injuries and problems.

Shin Splints. A shin splint is when pain along the shin bone (tibia) occurs. This pain is usually at the front outside part of the lower leg, but can also occur in the foot and ankle.

Fractures. Commonly referred to as a broken bone, fractures are a fairly common sports injury caused by a one-time injury to the bone (an acute fracture).

Dislocations. These occur when force pushes the bones in a joint out of alignment. Dislocations are also known as a luxation.

AVOIDING OVERTRAINING

The desire to reach peak physical condition and be at their very best for competition is something that drives athletes to push themselves to the limit in training. In a world where fractions of seconds or inches can make the difference between glory and despair, it is no wonder that athletes put themselves through very challenging routines day after day. However, this determination to improve performance can have its negative side as we all know that doing too much training can in fact have the opposite of the desired effect. Pushing too hard in training can lead to fatigue, burn-out and injury, while it is also a significant issue for young athletes as they have the added factor of being more susceptible to injury during periods of growth.



While the risk of injury can't be completely eradicated, there are some measures we can take to help reduce the risk, and a few of the best tips include the following:

Warm Up

It may sound obvious but the best way to reduce the chance of injury is by doing a proper warm up to allow you to gently stretch and exercise the muscles for approximately five to ten minutes prior to your session.

Keep hydrated

It is important to keep your body hydrated by drinking water before, during and after exercise, especially in hot conditions.

Use the right equipment

Make sure you are using the right equipment, including footwear and ensure that you also have the proper protective equipment which is vital to preventing injury.

Technique

Following the correct technique in an activity not only helps improve fitness but also prevents muscle injury. This is particularly important for young athletes.

Don't do too much

It is important to build up your exercise duration and intensity slowly as doing too much can have a damaging effect and increase the chance of injury. It is important to listen to your body when it is under too much stress. Rest periods during exercise are also beneficial.

Don't train on an injury

Make sure you have recovered from injury before going back to exercise or you will risk increasing the damage. Also, if you are in pain, stop.

Cool down

This is just as important as the warm up. Spending approximately five to ten minutes cooling down after exercise significantly reduces the risk of injury.

Take time off

Plan at least one day off during your week and up to a month break during the year to allow your body rest and recover as this will also reduce the risk of injury.

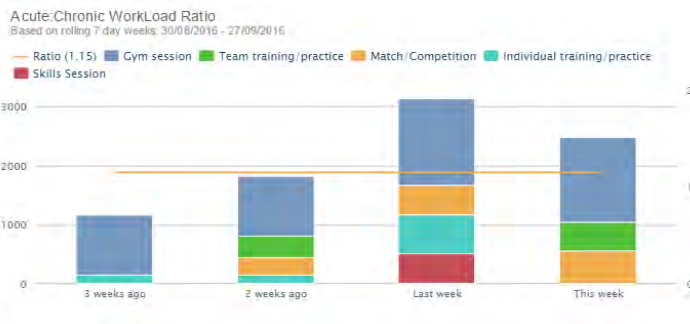
Recent studies have highlighted the fact that monitoring athletes helps reduce the risk of training. This is particularly relevant for elite athletes as keeping an up to date record of an athlete's condition can allow for interventions to significantly reduce injury risk.

In one such research article, [The training-injury prevention paradox: should athletes be training smarter and harder?](#)

Tim J Gabbett addresses the age-old question of the relationship between training and injury prevention.

The findings of Gabbett's study create a very strong case for careful monitoring of athletes. There is a clear need to ensure that athletes are

- following the correct training programme,
- doing sufficient training to build up their physical capacities and
- ensuring that they aren't doing too little training.



Gabbett begins by raising the belief held in some sections that higher injury rates are as a result of a higher training load, but highlights the evidence that training also helps protect against injury. He summarizes his findings by revealing that appropriate training loads will assist in improving levels of fitness, and as a consequence will provide protection against injury. The benefits of this are that increased physical condition will improve individual performance and in team sports, ensure a higher proportion of players available every week.

Keeping track of an athlete's routine not only in terms of training and injury tracking, but also nutrition and sleep along with overall well-being is a facility offered by [Metrifit](#) and one that has been highly successful when implemented in High Schools & Colleges throughout the US, and with sports teams right across the globe.

REFERENCES

[The training-injury prevention paradox: should athletes be training smarter and harder?](#) | Tim Gabbett

[How can I avoid a sports injury](#) | Sports Medicine Information

[Top 10 causes of sports injuries](#) | Kathy Mair

[2016 Sports Injury Prevention Tip Sheet](#) | American Academy of Pediatrics

[Injury Prevention](#) | Brian Mac Sports Coach

[The 5 most common sports injuries](#) | Myers Sports Medicine & Orthopaedic Center

[New study highlights benefits of monitoring](#)
[Creating a central hub of information is essential in monitoring technology](#)

[Asking the right questions to assess athlete wellbeing](#)

[Don't fall into the trap of overtraining](#)

[Symptoms of Overtraining](#)

