Program focuses on preventing sports injuries in young athletes

A growing number of preventable sports injuries are dismantling the athletic hopes and dreams of children at an early age. In response, the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine initiated the STOP Sports Injuries campaign this past April.

The campaign includes a comprehensive public outreach program focused on the importance of sports safety relating to overuse and trauma injuries. The initiative not only raises awareness and provides education on injury reduction, it highlights how playing safe and smart can enhance and extend a child’s athletic career, improve teamwork, reduce obesity rates, and create a lifelong love of exercise and healthy activity.

The STOP Sports Injuries program also established a Council of Champions to actively engage parents, coaches, athletes and health care providers in raising awareness of sports injury prevention. The council includes professional athletes, business leaders and medical experts.

Former Major League Baseball pitcher John Smoltz and St. Louis Rams quarterback Sam Bradford are Council of Champions members and national launch spokesmen. Both are familiar with the effects of sports injuries.

“My recent shoulder injury highlighted the importance of injury prevention, recovery and communicating with my coaches, trainers and health care providers,” said Heisman Trophy-winner Bradford. “I joined the STOP Sports Injuries campaign to share my experiences and to encourage young athletes to join this cause. It is important for kids to know that it is fun to play organized or recreational sports, but it’s even more important for them to stay healthy while they play.”

“As a baseball player and a father, preventing sports injuries to both me and my children is a priority. We need to create a stronger awareness of the importance of using proper techniques, opening lines of communication and encouraging safe play with athletes. This will keep young athletes healthy and in the game,” said Smoltz, a Cy Young Award-winning pitcher.

Meet our sports medicine team

Our physicians:
Robert Hosey, MD
Mary Lloyd Ireland, MD
James Jagger, MD
Darren Johnson, MD
Christian Lattermann, MD
Scott Mair, MD

Our athletic trainers:
Erica Dhuy, ATC
Kara Frey, ATC
David Jacobs, ATC
Candi Lee, ATC
Aaron MacDonald, ATC
Carrie McCloskey, ATC
Sheri McNew, ATC
Walker Terhune, ATC
Rob Ullery, ATC
Amy Waugh, ATC
Jenni Williams, ATC

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When lightning strikes: Developing severe weather plans
By Kara Frey, ATC

Lightning is one of the top causes of weather-related deaths in the United States.

If your team is participating in outdoor sports, it is important to have a plan ready in case of severe weather during practice or a sporting event.

In case of severe weather, you should:

• Designate a safe, enclosed shelter for each venue. This could be an office, a field house or a school building. Do not go into dugouts or under trees or bleachers. Lightning can still strike you, even if you’re covered.

• Make sure you also have a safe shelter for a visiting team.

• Evacuate everyone from outdoor fields or indoor and outdoor pools immediately at the first sign of a storm, including thunder, higher winds and dark clouds. Do not wait until you actually see lightning to seek shelter.

• Once activities have been suspended, wait at least 30 minutes following the last clap of thunder or lightning flash before returning outside.

Award winner. “The STOP Sports Injuries campaign sets out to give parents and athletes important tools to accomplish these goals and reduce youth sports injuries.”

The STOP Sports Injuries website includes sport-specific injury information for coaches, parents and athletes, as well as links to media, events and additional resources. By signing an online pledge to help stop sports injuries, visitors can also be registered for prizes.

For more information, visit www.STOPsportsinjuries.org.

A partner with the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, Safe Kids USA® is a nationwide network of organizations working to prevent unintentional childhood injury. The Safe Kids campaign provides information on sports and recreation safety for parents, educators and health care professionals.

For more information on Safe Kids USA, visit www.safekids.org.

UK Sports Medicine
UK Sports Medicine is staffed by sports medicine fellowship-trained physicians. Physical therapy and rehabilitation services are available. Our sports injury walk-in clinic requires no appointment – just walk in 7:30-8 a.m. Monday-Friday.

UK Sports Medicine is located at 601 Perimeter Drive, Suite 200, in Lexington (right off Alumni Drive). Call 859-323-4433 or 859-218-3131 for more information or to make an appointment. Visit us on the web at ukhealthcare.uky.edu/sportsmedicine.
Learn to recognize the signs of heat illness

Although heat illness is more prominent in the summer months, it can occur even when the environment is not hot or humid. Develop a plan to guarantee proper treatment for your athletes in case they show the following symptoms during practice or a game.

**Initial signs and symptoms of heat illness**
- Feeling lightheaded or dizzy
- Nausea or vomiting
- Headaches
- Pale skin
- Profuse sweating
- Muscle cramps
- Fatigue

**Emergency signs of heat illness** – athletes will need medical attention immediately
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Decreased sweating or dry skin
- High body temperatures
- Confusion
- Convulsions

If your athlete is experiencing heat illness, you should:
- Recognize the situation and determine the severity of the problem.
- Contact the trainer or call 911.
- Remove athlete from the heat by having them lie in a shaded area or indoors in air conditioning.
- Give the athlete water and/or a sports drink.
- Apply ice, towels and/or cold water to strategic locations such as the neck, armpits and midsection. This will help cool the cool core body temperature.
- Check the athlete’s vital signs – blood pressure, pulse and breathing – and monitor him or her every five minutes.
- Remove wet clothing and extra equipment.

For more information
Kentucky High School Athletic Association
www.khsaa.org/sportsmedicine/heat
This website also includes heat guidelines that should be followed for all Kentucky athletics.

National Athletic Trainers’ Association
www.nata.org/health-issues/heat-illness

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Nominate your Comeback Athlete of the Month

UK Sports Medicine is a proud sponsor of the “Scholastic Ball Report,” a high school sports show that airs every Saturday morning on WKYT. Once a month on the show, we will recognize an athlete who has worked incredibly hard to come back to his or her sport from a challenging injury. This award is sponsored by DonJoy and will be presented at the end of the month to this special athlete.

If you would like to nominate an athlete for the Comeback Athlete of the Month award, please e-mail Kara Frey at kmrohr2@uky.edu and describe what this athlete has overcome in order to return to his or her sport safely. Please include your contact information; the name, sport and school of the athlete; and a brief description of the athlete’s injury.
Because many teams do not stock a full first-aid kit, it is important for each individual athlete to keep basic medical supplies in his or her own bag.

A personal first-aid kit is easy to put together. Some first-aid items are universal, but each kit should be customized to the athlete’s own medical needs. Remind your athletes to restock their items often and add supplies as needed.

**Suggested basic supplies:**
- 1 bag (a zip-top plastic bag keeps supplies waterproof and is inexpensive to replace if lost or damaged)
- 3-4 gauze pads
- 2-3 adhesive bandages in various sizes

**Suggested supplies based on injury or illness:**
- Athletic tape and prewrap for taping an injured joint
- Prescribed inhaler if asthmatic
- Spare set of contact lenses with a case and solution
- EpiPen® Auto-Injector if prescribed for allergic reaction
- Any medication prescribed for an emergent disease or illness, such as diabetes

*Adults should hold all other prescription or over-the-counter medications to prevent misuse or sharing among younger athletes.*

If an athlete is traveling to a sporting event and will be accompanied by a non-guardian for the trip, make sure the accompanying adults and coach or team representative have the following in case of emergency:
- A copy of the athlete’s insurance card
- A consent-to-treat form
- A list of medical allergies, conditions and medication
- Correct contact information for the parents or guardians