



Volleyball Injuries

Each year, more than 460,000 high school students participate in interscholastic volleyball. As popularity has increased over the past two decades, the number of volleyball-related injuries has, too. While volleyball injuries rank among the lowest for all major sports, players are still at risk for both traumatic and overuse injuries.

What types of injuries are most common in volleyball?

Since volleyball involves repetitive overhead motions such as spiking and blocking, players are prone to overuse injuries of the shoulder. The repetitive forceful jumping during spiking and blocking can also lead to overuse injuries of the knee. In addition, volleyball players are particularly susceptible to finger injuries and ankle injuries.

Rotator Cuff Tendinitis and Shoulder Instability

During serving and spiking, the rotator cuff muscles are important in generating the necessary power to move the shoulder, as well as keeping it stable within the socket. These muscles can get irritated or fatigued with overuse. Rest and physical therapy services may be enough to resolve pain. If pain persists, talk to your physician.

Finger Injuries

When blocking, setting and digging, common finger injuries such as fractures, dislocations and ligaments tears can occur. If you are unable to bend your finger, consult with your sports medicine professional or athletic trainer. Treatment can vary significantly depending on the injury.

Patellar Tendinitis

Patellar tendinitis is inflammation of the tendon that connects the kneecap to the shin. Forceful jumping activities, such as spiking and blocking, can cause patellar tendinitis. Physical therapy focused on stretching and strengthening are beneficial as well as paying specific attention to how you land when jumping.

Ankle Sprains

The most common injuries in volleyball are related to the ankle. Sprains should be immobilized for the least amount of time possible to allow for faster recovery. Usually injuries can be treated with bracing and physical therapy. Occasionally, ankle sprains can be associated with fractures or cartilage injuries. If you experience, continued pain after several weeks seek further evaluation from a medical professional.

Low-Back Pain

The cause of most low-back pain is related to muscle or ligament strain. Pain usually resolves with rest and physical therapy. If low-back pain is accompanied by numbness or weakness in the legs, the culprit may be a herniated disk. Volleyball players are also at an increased risk for stress fractures in the low back or spondylolysis. If your pain persists more than a month and is worse with bending backward, you should consult a physician.

How can volleyball injuries be prevented?

- Perform proper strength training techniques for the lower back, shoulders and legs
- Use an external ankle support, such as an ankle brace or taping
- Minimize jump training on hard surfaces
- Warm up muscles with stretching and light aerobic exercises
- Be sure to properly cool down after practice
- Visit your doctor and follow instructions for any pain

Need immediate treatment for a volleyball injury?

The Children's HealthSM Andrews Institute for Orthopaedics & Sports Medicine offers treatment for all sport-related injuries. Call to book your appointment today. With same-day and next-day appointments, we can get you in and back in the game.

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