

SHEPPARD CHIROPRACTIC

Preventing Sports Injuries In Kids

The role of the Chiropractor is crucial in preventing sports injuries in children. Prior to any sports involvement, the child should undergo a Pre-Participation Evaluation (PPE). The PPE consists of a routine medical history and physical examination with emphasis on a neuromusculoskeletal evaluation, all of which are helpful in determining the readiness factor of the child for the sport in question. This "Toes to Nose" examination includes a postural and chiropractic examinations, thermal (heat) and EMG (muscle) scans. It has been my experience that discovering poor posture, muscle imbalances, and nerve interference will reduce chances for injury if corrected.

As the child begins sports participation, Dr. Joe can offer guidelines on exercise, conditioning and stretching techniques, nutrition and general fitness. Of course, when treatment is needed, Dr. Joe is fully equipped to manage non-surgical treatment of typical sports injuries. The treatment of sports injuries has been a basic approach in chiropractic since its' beginning because your child's nerve, muscle, bone alignment, and their performance are one in the same. Dr. Joe is able to recognize certain injuries because of his extensive athletic background. Dr. Joe will make a referral to the appropriate specialist if he is unable to help your child.

Although parents may not be able to soften the blow from an athletic injury they can minimize serious injury by



taking some basic preventative measures:

1. Determine the child's physical maturation level and match the child's size with an appropriate sport. Most competitive children's sports are organized according to chronological age rather than physical skill or maturation. Slower maturing children are often at greater risk of injury because they are competing with peers who may be larger and physically more developed.
2. Have your child be examined from "Toes to Nose." This examination is important because it will detect imbalance, poor posture and nerve interference that once corrected will reduce chance of injury and increase performance.
3. Seek professional advice. Given the fact that children will get hurt in play, it is critical that parents use good judgment in treating complaints about pain. What may act like a simple sprain may actually be a growth plate injury, which is very common in youth sports, that demands professional diagnosis on the extent of the injury and how to proceed with treatment.
4. Check to see if your child's organized athletic team has a chiropractor (skilled in the handling of sports injuries) affiliated with it. If not, ask your child's coach how Dr. Joe can become your son/daughter's team chiropractor.