



Upper Valley
Medical Center
Premier Health Partners

UVMC Center for Sports Medicine

Your Home Town Sports Medicine Team

450 N. Hyatt St., Suite 102 • Tipp City, Ohio, 45371 • (937) 667-2614 • UVMC.com

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CONTACT SPORT INJURIES AND LACK OF CONDITIONING

By: Greg Schultz, DPT, CSCS

Contact sport pre-season practices such as football and soccer are right around the corner with undoubtedly an increased incidence of injured players. All contact sport injuries are not preventable. However, the number of injuries can be reduced through proper training.

Attention must be paid to exactly what type of pre-season training is done as well as when it is done. For example, many players will come into their respective pre-season camps out of shape and will work their hardest to get in “game shape” two to three weeks before the season starts by undergoing heavy weight training programs. However, it is impossible to significantly improve strength and other physical abilities related to actual skill execution in such a short period of time. Effective strength training is required at least 6 weeks prior to pre-season practices to significantly improve performance and reduce the risk of injury.

Programs to develop great strength during the “in-season” period of training often lead to a greater number of injuries because the heavy weight training interferes with skill execution on the field. If certain athletes are out of shape, lift heavy weights to gain strength, and then go directly to practice sport skills on the playing field, this will interfere with their technique or execution of sport specific skills. Poor technique and/or inadequate neuromuscular coordination are the leading causes of athletic injuries.

Injuries have a neuromuscular basis and are based on a combination of nervous system firing, muscular strength and other physical qualities related to the execution of specific skills on the field. For example, many players get injured while running and changing direction, two of the more common skills for athletes. When physical contact is added to improper technique, or when the player is in poor position to move, the chance of injury is greatly increased. A common example is when a player gets hit while improperly executing a cut, placing his or her leg or body in a vulnerable position. If the player had better technique during the cutting or running action, the chances of injury when hit would be decreased significantly.

When players have developed ample strength, speed, quickness, and explosive power well in advance of the season, the main concern during the season should then be maintenance of strength. An athlete usually needs two to three days to recover after a game before initiating worthwhile strength training. This leaves very little time to develop any additional strength or speed gains prior to preparation for the next game. Thus, the concept of training for increased strength during the “in-season” phase is erroneous. It is physiologically impossible, especially if you also want top performances during the season.

Coaches and athletes are encouraged to recognize the importance of early pre-season training, such as sports enhancement programs or team strength training during the summer months. These programs combine sport specific explosive strength training with speed development, endurance training, and flexibility training to reduce future injuries. Players must be monitored and programs need to be structured so athletes can effectively gain strength, endurance, speed, flexibility and explosiveness to be ready to play when their sport practices actually begin. Be healthier, stronger, and more “game-ready” with an early start to pre-season training!

UVMC Center for Sports Medicine Summer Sports Enhancement and Injury Reduction Programs

EXPLOSIVE SPEED & POWER (ESP) Sports Enhancement Program

• For high school, college and professional athletes.

- Features the same type of off-season workouts used by elite Division I programs, utilizing Olympic lifts and core body strengthening techniques to improve power and strength.
- Proper running mechanics/ground based speed drills, plyometric jumping techniques and flexibility exercises are practiced to improve speed, agility, vertical jump and flexibility.

EXPLOSIVE SPEED & POWER JR. (ESP Jr.) Sports Enhancement Program

• For 7th and 8th graders.

- Utilizes age-appropriate strengthening activities and emphasizes education on proper form and techniques as well as injury prevention.
- Proper running mechanics/ground based speed drills, plyometric jumping techniques and flexibility exercises are practiced to improve speed, agility, vertical jump and flexibility.

SPORTSMETRICS™ Knee Injury Reduction Program

• Comprehensive training program specially designed for female athletes.

- Scientifically proven to reduce knee injuries and improve performance for sports that involve pivoting, cutting or jumping, such as soccer, basketball and volleyball.
- Combines dynamic warm-up with plyometric drills, strength training and flexibility exercises.

**For more program information or to register, call 667-2614 or 440-7152.
Program information and registration forms available online at www.UVMC.com/sportsmedicine**



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TEAM OF THE MONTH

The UVMC Center for Sports Medicine would like to congratulate the following teams from the area for their outstanding achievements and selection as Team of the Month this winter:

December: Graham High School Boys' Cross Country Team

The team was recognized for being the Central Buckeye Conference champion; district champion; regional runners up; and the ninth overall at the state championship. The state finish was the best for a Graham cross country team.

January: Covington High School Boys' Wrestling Team

The team was recognized for its success early in the wrestling season after winning the Northeastern Invitational for the third consecutive year, the Versailles Invitational, and the Troy Invitational. The team also won dual meets with Oakwood, Mechanicsburg, Lehman, and Tipp City, and the team registered its first victory over Coldwater in 10 years.

February: Tippecanoe High School Girls' Basketball Team

The team was recognized for winning the Central Buckeye Conference with a regular season record of 19-1. The team was on a 19 game winning streak heading into state tournament play while being ranked fourth in the state AP poll for Division II girls' basketball. Head coach Todd Varvel recorded his 100th win with the girls' varsity team in five years as the head coach.

March: Troy High School Girls' and Boys' Bowling Teams

The boys' and girls' teams were recognized for winning the Greater Western Ohio Conference North championship and the boys' team was GWOC champions. The girls' team was undefeated in the conference. Both teams advanced to district tournaments. The girls' team participated in the state championships finishing 11th in the state. Head coach Rob Dever was named GWOC North Coach of the Year and Alicia Simpson was named GWOC North Bowler of the Year.