

TIPS TO AVOID AN ACL OR SHOULDER INJURY

IT IS ANY ATHLETE'S NIGHTMARE TO BECOME INJURED, KEEPING THEM AWAY FROM THE SPORTS THEY LOVE. THE TEAM AT IOWA CITY AMBULATORY SURGICAL CENTER (IOWA CITY ASC) TREATS MANY SPORTS RELATED INJURIES IN ATHLETES OF ALL AGES.

On average, 46.5 million athletes will participate in organized sports this year. Studies have shown that 3.5 million student athletes will get a sports related injury. We interviewed Dr. Langland, an arthroscopy orthopedic surgeon at Iowa City ASC about ways that patients can prevent these types of sport related injuries. "Sports Medicine really affects all age groups. In the clinical setting, though, we are seeing that high risk patients with torn ACLs tend to be young teenage female athletes, often injured playing sports like soccer or basketball," he said. Dr. Langland also noted, "Contact sports like football make athletes more susceptible to knee injuries and torn ACLs. Older college athletes are also vulnerable to knee and shoulder injuries, but the older we get, our injury pattern changes a little bit. Recreational athletes, such as adults in their 40's to 50's, often damage their shoulders, sometimes tearing the rotator cuff. As we age, the quality of our tendons decreases making us much more vulnerable to injuries."

At Iowa City ASC, two of the most common injuries that we see in our orthopedic specialty include torn Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) and torn Labrum in the shoulder. The Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) runs diagonally in the middle of the knee. It prevents the Tibia from sliding in

front of the femur and provides stability to the knee. The ACL is found to be the most common sports related injury of the ligaments and is typically not a result of contact from another player. According to Dr. Jonathan Cluett, "About 80% of sports-related ACL tears are 'non-contact' injuries. An ACL tear is an instance when the knee is extended outside of its normal limits (hyperextended)." Here are some instances when an ACL can be torn:

- Changing directions quickly, or cutting around another player with one foot planted on the ground
- Falling or landing wrong from a jump (commonly in basketball)
- Missing a step or stepping off the curb wrong
- If a patient is inactive, or older, with weak muscles, there is a higher likelihood to injure the ACL in daily activity

The ACL, if torn, will require surgery to regain proper function of the knee. Many times, if not treated, it will feel as though the knee is giving out and the individual will have a lack of balance.

WOMEN ARE NEARLY 3 TIMES MORE LIKELY TO SUFFER FROM AN ACL INJURY COMPARED TO MEN ACCORDING TO ELIZABETH QUINN, AN EXERCISE PHYSIOLOGIST AND FITNESS CONSULTANT.

A multi-specialty surgical center.

2963 Northgate Drive
Iowa City, IA 52245

PH. 319 248-1500 www.iowacityasc.com



LABRUM TEAR

Another common injury that we see at the Iowa City ASC is Labrum tears. The Labrum is a firm ring of cartilage attached to the socket that keeps the shoulder in place. The labrum adds to the stability of the shoulder. Sports that are typically susceptible to labrum tears include: golf, baseball and gymnastics. If there is a tear in the labrum ligaments, it may affect how those ligaments function. Below are a few examples of when a labrum tear can occur:

- Athletes reaching or diving for an object then falling on the extended arm
- Falling on a shoulder
- Repeatedly lifting heavy objects or lifting heavy objects with a sudden jerk
- Performing a lot of over-the-head activity such as in baseball

We sat down with Dr. Langland, seeking advice on how to prevent these sorts of injuries and what the most common questions are from patients and parents. According to Dr. Langland:

“For most patients, prevention and preparation are the biggest part of avoiding these sorts of injuries. It’s not wise to give 100% effort without the preparation and strength-training before a major event. Ultimately, it’s what we do to prepare our bodies for the exertion and stress of the physical activity that protects athletes best from a potential injury.”

It is difficult to fully prevent torn ACLs and torn Labrum ligaments. Speaking with an athletic trainer, physical therapist and physician can help you best identify triggers and weak spots. The best course of action is to stretch before physical activity, strength training (e.g. lunges and squats) and to train in the pre-season for your favorite sport. You should see a physician for a pre-sport physical to advise you of specific preventative measures for your particular situation.

Patients are often concerned about the recovery time related to these sorts of injuries. The recovery process for these injuries can be slow. During surgery we are attaching soft tissue to the bone. It can take 10-12 weeks for the tissue to heal. It is a very slow and tedious process, so the rehab for these injuries takes more time. The average recovery time can be 5-6 months and sometimes longer. Students often want to know when they can go back to school after surgery. If a surgery is earlier in the week, that student will be out all week. If the surgery is later in the week, they would be able to get back to school on Monday.

Our team at Iowa City ASC is committed to serving our patients with the best quality of care and the resources to get them back to what they love doing. Please contact us if you have any questions at info@iowacityasc.com.