

# Injury Prevention

*Orthopaedics involves the diagnosis, treatment, rehabilitation, and prevention of injuries and diseases to the body's musculoskeletal system, which includes bones, muscles, joints, ligaments, tendons and nerves.*

Along with maintaining a healthy weight and eating a well-balanced and calcium-rich diet, keeping active is a significant factor in decreasing the risk of injuries by creating stronger bones and improving mobility and balance, according to the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons. One out of every seven Americans reports some type of orthopaedic impairment. In addition, it is estimated that employees in the U.S. miss more than 147 million work days annually due to orthopaedic injuries, which can range from Carpal Tunnel Syndrome, sprains, osteoporosis, broken bones, to knee and hip replacement.

While keeping active throughout life can help prevent orthopaedic injury or disease, it is also important for both young and old alike to practice general safety and prevention during activities:

- Always warm-up and cool down (such as stretching and walking at a normal pace while moving your arms) before and after you exercise in order to help your body prepare and recover from activity.
- Advance your skill level gradually—not by more than 10 percent each week.
- Adjust equipment and furniture to fit your needs. If using weight-training equipment for the first time, make sure you receive some instruction before you begin.

- Always wear appropriate shoes and safety gear for each activity.
- Stop exercising immediately if you experience any pain or swelling when exercising. If it persists, have it evaluated by a physician.
- Vary your routine by alternating weight-bearing exercises (walking, jogging, dancing, etc.) with strength-training exercises (lifting light weights, etc.).
- Exercise at least 30 minutes a day, which can be broken down into 10 or 15 minute increments.

If you have a minor orthopaedic injury, basic home treatment consists of **RICE** (**R**est the injury for at least 24 to 48 hours; **I**ce the injury with cold packs immediately for 15 minutes every hour for up to 48 hours to prevent or minimize swelling; **C**ompress by wrapping the injury in an Ace bandage or compression sleeve; and **E**levate the injury on pillows above heart level, if possible, when resting or applying ice). However, always consult with a physician immediately if you suspect a bone fracture, severely sprained joint, or if pain is still severe after two days.

**To speak with a professional, please call: 800.461.9179**

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