

Cognizance of Rehabilitation and Sports Medicine

M. Rakhee Poovanna

*Assistant Director of Physical Education
Government First Grade College, Virajpet Kodagu Karnataka*

Dr. V.A. Manickam

*Associate Professor
Department of Physical Education and Health Sciences
Alagappa University, Karaikudi, Tamilnadu*

Introduction

Sports medicine is the branch of medical science that deals with physical fitness and treatment and prevention of injuries related to sports and exercise. It helps in preventing, diagnosing, managing and treating the sports injuries and also lays stress on improving the performance of the sports person. Although most sports teams have employed team physicians for many years, it is only since the late 20th century that sports medicine began to evolve as a distinct entity in health care.

Sports medicine is an integrated field that confers countless benefits to the sports person and active individual throughout the globe. Contrary to popular belief, sports medicine is not merely the formal application of specialized medical skill in the context of an exam room. It also encompasses the individual and preventive measures that the sports person must take outside the clinic or hospital. The beauty of sports medicine is that it invites the expertise of doctors, surgeons, therapists and homeopathic experts alike. Furthermore, it personalizes its methods to the individual, instead of applying generalized treatments.

Importance of Sports Medicine

The primary tenet of sports medicine is helping a person perform to his or her maximum, based on the physiological parameters, injury management or by working on modifiable factors influencing performance. To elaborate further, a sports medicine specialist should be able to test and evaluate a physiological parameter specific to a sports discipline and suggest methods of further improvement. In terms of injuries the most important factor to determine is the cause of the injury which might be due to external factors such as inappropriate training methods, incorrect footwear, a racquet size or grip or a training surface which might be a factor besides looking for internal factors such as limb length misalignments or reduced strength or flexibility.

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Merely treating an injury might not be the correct approach as most sports injuries are due to repeated activities. In fact most sports injuries are Grade 1 or 2 injuries which can be managed conservatively. The most important aspect of injury management is to return to sport in the shortest possible time with adequate rehabilitation of the injury.

Classification and Causes of Sports Injuries

Injuries can occur as a result of contact sports or musculoskeletal overuse. This is a simplified method of classifying sports injuries

Sports Injury

DIRECT injuries are caused by external forces and can result in fractures, dislocation, sprains and bruises.

INDIRECT Injuries are caused by forces generated within the body and occurs as a result of inadequate warm up, improper movements and excessive strain on muscles and tendons.

OVER USE injuries result from intense or unreasonable use of joints or body areas and can also be provoked by repetitive low impact exercises such as jogging or stepping It can cause pain and inflammation around the site of injury.

SOFT tissue injuries include muscle contusions/ strains, tendons and ligament tears, sprains, skin lacerations, blood vessel and nerve damage and callus formation in cartilages

HARD tissue injuries include bone fractures and dislodging of teeth. They are more serious than soft tissue injuries as they constitute the main structural support.

Other factors influencing sports injuries are improper training surface, incorrect footwear, and lack of continuity in practice, magnitude of the injury, structural abnormalities and poor training methods.

Management of Sports Injuries

1) PRICE therapy

- P - Prevention
- R- Rest
- I- ice
- C- Compression
- E - Elevation

2) Equipment Changes

Like changing helmets and face masks in hockey and chin protector in baseball.

3) Field Changes

Avoiding potholes, craters and rocks near the play area.

4) Individual Preparation Prior to Participation

Warm ups, jogging, stretching, drinking adequate water and a balanced diet.

5) Some of the recent trends in the treatment of sports injury are arthroscopy, tissue engineering for cartilage regeneration and platelet rich plasma therapy for tendon injuries.

Conclusion

Injury management is one of the most important facets of sports medicine. With the right course of action even a serious injury can undergo a reasonable rate of recovery and receive apt and attentive treatment. Above all Prevention is Better than Cure.

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