

## 5 MOST COMMON SPORTS INJURIES

Participating in sport is a fantastic way to keep fit and maintain an active social life. Although extremely beneficial for your health, there are injury risks associated with every sport. Whether you play for fun or competitively, some injuries can't be avoided. Here are the top 5 most common sports injuries.

### 1. Sprains & Strains

A sprain occurs when a ligament (band of connective tissue that attaches bone to bone) tears from overstretching. A sprain is most common in ankles, wrists and knees. A strain is when muscle or tendon (band of connective tissue that attaches muscle to bone) tears from being overstretched. Strains and sprains can range from being very minor to complete ruptures of the ligament, muscle or tendon.

### 2. Knee Injuries

Mild knee injuries such as ITB Friction Syndrome, PatelloFemoral Pain Syndrome and tendonitis are common in runners or sports involving running, people who begin a training program with inadequate fitness and those who suddenly increase training volume/intensity. Ligamentous injuries to the knee are more catastrophic and often require surgery in severe cases or in players wishing to return to competition. The most commonly injured ligaments that are injured are the Anterior Cruciate Ligament and the Medial Collateral Ligament. 80% of these injuries are caused by non-traumatic mechanisms, such as twisting awkwardly. Injury to the menisci may also occur (either alone or in conjunction with ligamentous injury).

### 3. Shin Splints

Pain along the shin bone (tibia) is what defines a shin splint. This pain is usually at the front outside part of the lower leg, but may also be in the ankle (anterior shin splints) or where the bone meets the calf muscles at the inner edge of the bone (medial shin splints). Shin



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Splints occur from overuse and are extremely common in runner who run on hard surfaces and/or for long distances. Unsupportive footwear and poor biomechanics such as flat feet and excessively long strides can increase the risk of developing shin splints. Addressing biomechanics, running technique and muscle imbalances is crucial to prevent and treat shin splints. This is what your physio is for!

#### 4. Fractures

Broken bones may occur from non-traumatic mechanisms (e.g. awkward landings), by trauma (e.g. tackle or crash) or by overuse (stress fractures). Most breaks are considered an emergency and need to be addressed by medical staff. Stress fractures are an accumulation of small breaks in the bone, which may eventually lead to a complete break. Fractures lead to time away from activity and immobilisation of the area. Muscle wasting and loss of fitness often occur and it is important to undergo appropriate rehabilitation guided by your physio before returning to sport.

#### 5. Dislocations

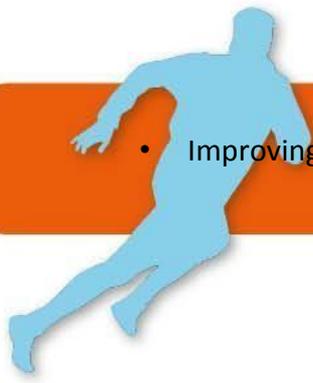
These occur when a force pushes the bones in a joint out of alignment. Dislocations may be complete (known as a luxation) or partial (known as a subluxation). These injuries are most common in contact sports such as rugby. Dislocations are usually considered an emergency and require medical staff to place the joint back into alignment. Sometimes the joint may realign itself, and this is more common in subluxations. The most commonly dislocated joints are the fingers and shoulders. Some severe injuries may require surgery, but most are treated conservatively with physiotherapy.

#### Why & How do Injuries Occur?

- Overuse is the most common reason injuries occur in sports.
- Poor fitness and inadequate strength before beginning to play often results in injury
- Non-traumatic mechanisms such as twisting or pivoting
- Traumatic mechanisms such as being hit in a tackle or pushed to the ground

#### How can Physio help?

- Correcting poor biomechanics
- Improving technique
- Improving strength
- Improving core strength



- Improving flexibility

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