BACK 2H EALTH

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WINTER SPORTS INJURIES

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Inside this issue:

Special Points Of Interest

- A drop in core body temperature of just 1°C causes the muscles to shiver, which in turn can lead to low blood sugar levels and reduced sporting performance.
- The use of helmets by skiers and snowboarders could prevent or reduce the severity of nearly half of head injuries to adults and more then half of head injuries to children less than 15 years old
- Whether consciously or unconsciously, winter runners may change their foot strike pattern to protect themselves, which can lead to muscle strain or other injuries
- Keeping the ankle perpendicular to the ground and straight up and down while skiing brings out the best performance

PrepareForYourWinterSport

Under the beauty of a blanket of freshly fallen snow, the outdoors calls. For a while, winter doesn't feel quite so cold, and people of all ages feel a sense of youthful excitement about bundling up and getting outside. Many winter dangers are caused by the season's more popular sports—skiing, snowboarding, sledding and snowmobiling. The most common skiing related injuries are knee and ankle sprains and fractures.

How can you prepare for your sport?

1) Exercising regularly to keep your muscles strong
2) Perform gentle stretching and flexibility exercises
3) Taking the time to warm up before sports activities and to cool down after
4) Avoid activities that push your joints beyond their normal range of motion.
5) Taking it slow on downhill slopes
6) Condition the muscles particular to your chosen sport a few weeks or months beforehand.
7) Acclimatize yourself to exercising in colder weather

Jumps are the most common cause of spinal injuries among snowboarders

Massage Therapy

During the early phase of an ankle or knee sprain a massage therapist would concentrate on draining the swollen area, as well as loosening the muscles of the leg which tend to tighten when a sprain occurs. Work would be performed to the compensatory muscles and surrounding tissue to increase drainage and thus increase the overall healing.

Later in the treatment process the specific ligaments that were damaged can be worked on. This is to decrease the amount of scar tissue/adhesions that form. Certain muscles often tighten with these sprains. They include: quadriceps, hamstrings, adductors, peroneals, gastrocnemius, soleus, tibialis anterior / posterior (shins and calf muscles), as well as all the other muscles that cross over the ankle and knee joints. A combination of massage therapy and the Active Release Technique (**ART**) would be utilized to aid in releasing the tight musculature. If you are not familiar with The Active Release Technique there are pamphlets in the office you can pick up and read.

Back2Health

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We 're on the web!
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This month's talk is on..

SITTING ON THE JOB

November 20th, 2004
10:00 - 11:00 am

If you are interested please sign up in the binder on the bookshelf located in the waiting area

The Role Of Acupuncture In The Treatment Of Sprains

Acupuncture for ankle sprains can do three things. First of all, it increases the local (micro-) circulation which relieves the swelling that enhances the healing process and at the same time alleviates pain. Acupuncture is known to decrease pain by increasing a patient' s tolerance and stimulate the release of endorphins. Acupuncture can improve the overall function of the joint due to the milder pain experienced by the patient.

Once the acupuncture needles are inserted they are left in for 15-20 minutes. The number of treatments is dependant on the severity of the sprain, as well as how fast the patient's body responds to the acupuncture treatments. For these sprains most patients obtain the best results with 4-8 acupuncture treatments.

Cold related injuries common to winter sports include:

- Blisters
- Sunburn
- Frostbite
- Hypothermia
- Sprains and strains
- Bone problems

HealingPhasesForSprains

Injuries to the ligaments in the ankle and knee undergo a series of phases during the healing process: hemorrhage (bleeding), inflammation, fibroblastic (cell) proliferation, collagen protein formation, and collagen maturation. The more severe the ligament injury, the greater the time required to progress thought the stages of healing. Early mobilization of joints following a ligament injury actually stimulates collagen bundle orientation and promotes healing (tissue repairing). Prolonged immobilization of these sprains is a common treatment error. Functional rehabilitation begins on the day of injury and continues until pain-free gait (walking) and activity are attained. The four components of rehabilitation are: range of motion rehabilitation, progressive muscle-strengthening exercises, proprioceptive training and activity-specific training. Full ligament strength is not re-established for several months.

Chronic ankle and knee sprain problems can cause injuries in the leg as well as to the shin, hip and/or back. This is due to the altered biomechanics of the foot during the gait/walking cycle. Be sure to have the feet checked for balance to ensure no further injuries take place. Several tests can be performed by your chiropractor to determine if there are problems in your ankle from old sprains. A foot scan or gait analysis should be performed by Keri-Lyn, the kinesiologist to determine if you have an altered gait mechanism due to a prior sprain. If there are old problems present they can be worked on through different exercises to ensure future injuries do not occur!