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## PREVENTION OF REPEAT JOINT INJURIES

Foot and ankle injuries are some of the most commonly injured body parts in sports. Good treatment can help the body heal faster, but there often remains weakness through the joint. This leads to a more unstable joint and a greater chance of another injury. What can be done about this and how can I strengthen my joint to prevent repeat injuries in the future? Tips below will help not only prevent joint injury but also lessen your risk of injury again.

## MEDICAL CARE AND TREATMENT OPTIONS INCLUDE:

If you hurt or re-injure yourself, your Osteopathic Family Doctor (D.O.) may suggest rest, ice packs, ACE bandage, and elevating the affected area to decrease pain and swelling along with taking a pain pill. A cane, crutches, or even a cast may help with some joint injuries. Physical therapy and/or Osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT) also may help healing. Joint injuries seen and treated early can help prevent the injury from getting worse leading to problems like chronic pain or disability. Your Family doctor along with a physical therapist or athletic trainer will help you decide which treatment plan(s) will work best for you. In case of any emergency, you should call your doctor or call 911 or, if possible, safely go to the nearest hospital.

## PREVENTION OF REPEAT JOINT INJURIES INCLUDES:

Eating a good diet with fresh fruits and vegetables and being at a healthy weight are keys to health. Being in good physical shape, warming up and lightly stretching before & after playing a sport, exercising regularly, and wearing protective gear when playing give strength to the muscles that hold the joints steady. Wearing socks and athletic shoes that fit properly keep feet from moving around in the shoe. Avoid running on uneven surfaces. Be careful running on hills. Avoid running or playing sports when tired or in pain. Previously injured joints, such as an ankle, may be helped from a brace or tape for support. A period of training or physical therapy to strengthen joints can help prevent another injury again as well.

## FACTORS INCREASING RISK OF REPEAT JOINT INJURIES INCLUDE:

Not being in good shape, wearing sport shoes or sneakers that do not fit well or provide proper support and playing high-risk or contact sports can lead to increased risk of repeat joint injury.

Source(s): Sports injuries. gov, Up To Date, and WebMD. org.

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