

Sports Podiatry



It has often been suggested in various publications that sporting activities may increase the likelihood of a problem developing in the foot or lower limb.

This leaflet will help to identify the most common injuries that may occur during sporting activities.

Groin

Iliospoas Muscle Strain

The iliospoas muscle is the strongest flexor of the hip joint. Injury to this muscles often results from sporting activities involving lots of kicking, such as football. Individuals with iliospoas muscle strain complain of aching in one side of the groin, and

pain is produced when the action of kicking takes place.

The Hip

There are many causes of hip pain. Any problem first needs to be diagnosed by taking a detailed medical and sporting history from the patient. The type of hip problem can depend on several factors. Age, sporting activity, site and type of pain, and the presence of limping, are just a few issues that will inform the diagnosis. The most common causes of hip pain are listed below:

- Osteoarthritis
- Rheumatoid Arthritis
- Ligament tears
- Fractures
- Nerve entrapments (sciatic nerve)
- Synovitis

Thigh Pain

Quadriceps muscle strain

At the front of the thigh, there is a group of four muscles that all work together to support the knee. Injury to the quadriceps is common in sporting activities involving running, jumping and kicking (eg football and sprinting). Individuals complain of pain during activity, and swelling may occur after injury. Treatment will depend on the severity of the injury.

Hamstring Strain / Tear

A hamstring sprain causes pain in the back of the thigh. A hamstring injury can occur during activities involving high speeds and rapid change of direction. The sports patient finds walking difficult, and there may be a feeling of tightness in the muscles. The hamstrings need to be assessed and appropriate treatment undertaken.

Sciatic Nerve Entrapment

This is where the sciatic nerve becomes entrapped between the muscles. Individuals with this condition complain of sharp pain that shoots down the back of the thigh. Due to this entrapment, the muscles become weakened and pain is often felt during walking, sitting or standing for long periods.

Knee Pain

Again, like the hip, there are many knee injuries that can develop during sporting activities. A few are listed below:

Anterior Cruciate Ligament Sprain /Tear

This is a very common injury to the knee where the anterior cruciate ligament inside the knee is damaged. Women are more likely to develop this type of injury. Fast and sudden changes in direction place shear stress on the ligament, causing injury. After the injury to the ACL the whole knee swells and there is reduced motion at

the knee joint. Individuals sometimes report an audible 'pop' when the ACL tears; intense pain also follows injury.

Patella Dislocation

During twisting movements and jumping, the knee may suddenly give way, and the patella may dislocate. Pain and swelling of the knee can occur after the injury. Causes of this injury can result from underlying biomechanical problems in the knee joint.

Medial & Lateral Meniscus Injury

This injury results from shear stresses when the knee flexes and twists. The knee swells and becomes very painful. The knee occasionally locks and movement is restricted. This injury is often associated with ACL tears.

Shin Pain

A common complaint among athletes, especially distance runners. 'Shin splint' is the medical term for pain along the inner surface of the tibia. Shin splints may develop for several reasons, eg, bone fractures, tendon and ligament injuries and compartment syndrome.

Calf Pain

Gastrocnemius Muscle Tears

Commonly occurs in tennis and squash players. Individuals complain of a sharp, stabbing and

tearing sensation in the calf muscle. Stretching and continuation of play will reproduce pain.

Achilles tendon tear

The Achilles tendon is the thickest and strongest tendon in the body. Rupture of this tendon is more common in men than women. After injury, severe pain, swelling and disability will occur. The individual may also feel pain and stiffness in the mornings. Individuals may find that pain will often reduce with exercise and walking.

Ankle Pain

Again, ligament injuries are common injuries involving the ankle. These injuries commonly occur in individuals who play netball, basketball and football. Injuries at the ankle are often accompanied by an audible 'pop'. Depending on the severity of the injury, the athlete may continue to play sports or swelling may appear along with instability of the ankle.

Foot Pain

Fracture of the metatarsals

Fractures are common in the 2nd metatarsal seen in ballet dancers and footballers. Pain is worse during activity and walking. Individuals complain that the pain becomes more intense with increased activity. X-rays and bone scans will confirm the diagnosis.

If you have any aches or pains in any part of your body, a simple solution is only an appointment away! Could you benefit from orthotics? Ask for our biomechanics leaflet to find out more.

Please feel free to call us.....

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