

Best Practices

In Youth sports Injury Prevention

For Administrators

Based on recommendations of

The Youth Sports safety Alliance - NATA



1. Offer seasonal orientations for parents specific to the regimens and procedures of each sport that educate parents on related risks, signs of injuries, and how to respond appropriately in the event of an injury.
2. Develop confidential lines of communication between parents, coaches, and administrators to discuss personal health related issues such as injuries and pre-existing conditions related to sports.
3. Require youth coaches to complete a course(s), which focuses on prevention, recognition, and understanding of common athletic injuries and immediate first aid.
4. Hold an orientation on the use and sizing of sport equipment prior to the start of the sport season.
5. Require a standard *Pre-Participation Examinations* (PPE's). It is recommended that the use of the American Heart Association's 14-point checklist, that consist of detailed personal and family medical history and physical examination is used to assess the potential for congenital and genetic heart disease.
6. Establish a training recovery schedule to prevent overuse injuries.
7. Create a concussion protocol that includes recognition of signs and symptoms and management protocol. The information is to be disseminated to players, coaches, and parents/guardians.
8. Monitor hydration and disseminate hydration requirements to players, coaches, and parents/guardians.
9. Develop an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) that includes environmental factors such as heat and humidity, lightning, and others, in addition to possible traumatic injuries such as concussions, cardiac arrest, spinal injuries, etc.
10. As part of the Emergency Action Plan, a sports organization should schedule an annual enactment in order to rehearse the EAP. The enactment should include response by the local medical team.
11. Include sports officiating services as part of the EAP.
12. Adopt and gain national utilization of a digital database that tracks the injury history of each athlete.
13. Create a "return to play" policy that parents are to sign at the beginning of the season.

14. Schedule an annual review of all facilities for risk factors.

Contributors: Ron Courson (ATC), Dr. Jennifer Bhalla , Phd, Chad Gillilan(ATC), and Dr. John Hammett, Phd (Chairman) as members of the National Council of Youth Sports Safety; Coaching, Athletic Training and Officiating Working Group; 2015