

VOLLEYBALL SAFETY

A PARENT'S GUIDE FOR KEEPING KIDS IN THE GAME

Knee and ankle injuries are the most common injuries seen in youth volleyball. Parents and coaches should take precautions to be sure their players don't suffer sudden or overuse injuries. This reference guide provides information on the most common volleyball injuries requiring treatment.

SHOULDER INJURIES

Because of repeatedly moving their arms overhead, volleyball players can suffer overuse injuries to their shoulders. Without ample time for recovery, the tissue cannot adapt to the demands placed on it, and further damage is likely. Overuse injuries, also called chronic sports injuries, can have symptoms including:

- Pain when performing the activity or sport
- Intermittent swelling
- Decreasing athletic performance
- Dull pain even at rest

ANKLE INJURIES

The most common injury in sports is a **lateral ankle sprain**. This injury occurs in volleyball by rolling the ankle over the outside of the foot. A lateral ankle sprain causes damage to the ligaments just below the bone on the outside of the ankle. In some cases a "pop" can be felt or heard by the athlete. Treatment recommendations vary with the severity of the Injury:

- Mild sprains require rest, but not necessarily medical treatment.
- Injuries with persistent swelling, pain, or any deformity should be seen by a physician.



KNEE INJURIES

A common injury in youth volleyball is an **anterior cruciate ligament (ACL)** sprain or tear, which occurs when the knee is twisted forcefully or hyper extended. Athletes with a damaged ACL often describe a "pop" at the time of injury, followed by a lot of swelling within a few hours.

Athletes should see a pediatrician or pediatric sports medicine physician if pain and/or swelling persist. In addition:

- In younger athletes, bone maturity helps to determine the treatment plan. Injury to an open growth plate requires special consideration by a pediatric orthopedic specialist.
- Core strengthening and training in proper cutting, jumping and landing technique may help to prevent this injury.

Knee pain that comes on slowly over time can indicate other problems, such as:

- **Patello-femoral pain syndrome (Runner's Knee)** – pain in the front of the knee related to muscle and tissue stress around the knee cap. This can be addressed with proper training in physical therapy
- **Osteochondritis dissecans** – a defect in the knee's cartilage that can become evident over time during repetitive activity
- **Osgood-schlatter disease** – stress-related inflammation in a growth center at the front of the knee

VOLLEYBALL SAFETY (CONT.)

SPORTS SAFETY

Children ages 5 to 14 make up almost 40 percent of all sports injuries treated in hospital emergency rooms. Injuries in children are best handled by pediatric specialists trained in treating skeletally immature patients.

Athletes should see a pediatrician or pediatric sports medicine physician if any of these symptoms are present:

- Deformity
- Limping that lasts more than 48 hours
- Soft tissue swelling that gets worse the next day despite ice and over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication.
- Effusion – mobile soft tissue swelling on both sides of a joint, often easily seen at the knee or ankle
- Pain that returns quickly with activity at the next session or is not gone after two weeks of rest.

How to protect your child:

- Schedule your child for an annual physical before playing sports.
- Monitor play and practice and encourage players to abide by the rules.
- Have a first aid kit handy and an emergency action plan in place.
- Keep sports fun! Remember to be positive and don't push kids to perform beyond their abilities.

Bumps, Bruises, Twists & Muscle Strains

These can affect all areas of the body.

Recommended treatment is the **PRICE** formula:

Protect the area with a sling or crutches, if necessary.

Rest the injured area.

Ice the injury for 20 minutes at a time. Do not apply the ice directly to the skin.

Compress the injured area with a wrap. Do not pull tightly, as this can cut off circulation.

Elevate the injured area above the heart, if possible.

Make sure your young athlete:

- Wears appropriate properly-fitting safety gear, free of heavy wear and tear
- Stays properly hydrated. Kids don't sweat as much as adults and need to drink plenty of fluids before, during and after activity.
- Does warm-up and cool-down exercises before and after practices and games
- Gets proper rest and avoids overdoing it.

SSM HEALTH CARDINAL GLENNON SPORTSCARE

SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare is the premier pediatric sports medicine provider in St. Louis and St. Charles. We provide exclusive, direct access to comprehensive medical care for young athletes. By working with multiple specialists and care partners, we guarantee your child will get the top care that is best suited to treat their unique injury, improving recovery time and outcome.

Specialists your child has access to through SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare include orthopedists, pulmonologists, cardiologists, radiologists, neurologists, emergency medicine physicians, adolescent medicine physicians, rehabilitation specialists, physical therapists, nutritionists and pediatric psychologists.

Partners your child has access to through SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare include SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital, SSM Health

Orthopedics, SSM Physical Therapy and SLUCare Physician Group of Saint Louis University. We also keep kids in the game through educational programs and support for parents, coaches and athletes that focus on injury prevention, proper technique and overall athletic health.

For more information about SSM Health Cardinal Glennon SportsCare or to find a specialist for your athlete, call us at **314-577-5640** or visit us at cardinalglennon.com/sportscare.

Expert care for young athletes by SSM Health Cardinal Glennon Children's Hospital and SSM Health emergency medicine specialists, **24 hours a day in the ER** at: SSM Health DePaul Hospital, SSM Health St. Clare Hospital, SSM Health St. Joseph Hospital - Lake Saint Louis, SSM Health St. Joseph Hospital - St. Charles.



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