Common Injuries

Road Rash / Abrasions
A common injury caused by a fall where an area of skin is rubbed off. A scrape is often dirty, so make sure to clean the area thoroughly even if you don’t see dirt.

- Wash your hands
- Wash the cut thoroughly with mild soap and water
- Large pieces of dirt or debris should be removed with tweezers
- If available, apply antibiotic ointment and a non-adhesive bandage

Otherwise, let it air dry. Larger scrapes or scrapes that bleed more should be covered with a gauze bandage. Ice can help reduce swelling. Do not apply ice directly to the skin.

See a doctor if the scrape is very large, contains debris deep inside or appears infected (warmth or red streaks at the injured site, pus or a fever).

Knee Pain & Tendonitis
Tendonitis is the inflammation, irritation and swelling of a tendon. It can occur as a result of injury, overuse or aging as the tendon loses elasticity. Any action that places prolonged repetitive strain on the joints and muscles can cause tendonitis. The most common symptoms are pain, tenderness and increased pain with movement.

Hand Numbness / Ulnar Neuropathy
A problem with the nerve that travels from the wrist to the shoulder leads to movement or sensation problems in the wrist or hand. Symptoms include numbness, tingling, burning, or decreased sensation or weakness in the hand. The cause is generally from prolonged pressure on the handle bars.

Fractures and Dislocations
It’s difficult to tell a dislocated bone from a broken bone, but the basic First Aid is the same. Symptoms include a visibility misshapen limb, swelling, intense pain, limited mobility and numbness. Keep the person still and calm, contact your healthcare provider.

Common Cycling Treatment, Injuries, and Prevention

P.R.I.C.E. Treatment Method

Definition

P. Protect – Protect the injury from further harm by using a brace, splint, immobilizer, or ACE bandage.

R. Rest – Rest the injured area by not participating in activities that are painful to perform.

I. Ice – Ice the area for 20 minutes every 2 hours. Never use heat because it increases swelling.

C. Compression – Compress the swelling using an ACE bandage or compression wrap to limit any further swelling. When wrapping the injured area, start at the furthest point away from the body and move toward the body. Be sure that you are not cutting off circulation.

E. Elevate – Elevate the injured area above the heart to pull blood flow away from the injured area.

For more information, or to contact one of our Sports Medicine Outreach Liaisons, email us at SportsMedicine@amitahealth.org or call us at 847.385.7120 or 708.245.6051.

AMITAhealth.org/SportsMedicine
Dehydration
Outdoor endurance athletes such as cyclists are at an increased risk of dehydration. It is important to drink fluids before, during and after a workout or ride.

- Water should be available during a workout or ride
- Drinking often, ideally every 15-30 minutes
- Sports drinks are recommended for activities lasting longer than one hour to replace sugar and salt as well as water
- Avoid alcohol and caffeine

Early signs of dehydration can be non-specific and include:
- Fatigue
- Headache
- Apathy
- Decreased athletic performance
- Thirst
- Irritability
- Nausea

Signs of advanced dehydration include:
- Dark urine
- Dry lips and mouth
- Disorientation
- Decrease in reaction time

Athletes with any of these signs should rest and drink water or sports drinks. If athletes don’t improve, feel dizzy or faint, or have not had much urine output, they should be seen by a doctor. Seek emergency treatment if the athlete is disoriented, unable to drink or has pale skin.

Prevention
Equipment
Proper saddle type, seat, handle bar height and position increase comfort, performance and reduce the risk of injury. Always wear protective gear such as a bike helmet, cycling shoes, gloves and clothing designed for cycling.

Know the Road
Understanding the specific trail type and terrain you will be riding on will help you avoid accidents or unnecessary stress for your riding ability.

Warming Up
Start by riding at a slower, more relaxed pace and gradually work up to full speed. As the level of activity increases, the muscles burn more oxygen and their temperature rises. When perspiration begins, the muscles are warmed up and ready for a workout.

Stretching
Stretch only after having warmed up; a cold muscle is more likely to tear when stretched. Stretching after a workout increases flexibility and reduces stress on joints. Perform stretches slowly, holding each position for at least five seconds.

Nutrition
Proper nutrition before and during your workout will help you maintain blood sugar levels and keep you adequately hydrated for peak performance.