Common Golf Treatment, Injuries, and Prevention

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

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 causes the area to swell even more.
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.

COMMON INJURIES

Back Pain
Muscle aches and pains are most commonly related to tension, overuse or muscle injury from physically demanding work or exercise such as golf. In these situations, the pain tends to involve specific muscles and starts during or just after the activity. Muscle pain also can involve other soft tissues such as ligaments, tendons and fascia.

The most common type of chronic pain among golfers is low back pain related to muscle and ligament strain, and can usually be resolved with rest, physical therapy or other orthopedic treatment.

Golfers Elbow
A common cause is tendonitis, an inflammation and injury to the tendons (soft tissues that attach muscle to bone). Due to the gripping and rotating in a golf swing, golfers are more likely to injure the tendons on the inside of the elbow. This is similar to tennis elbow, or injury to the tendons of the outside of the elbow, commonly seen in racquet sports.

Shoulder Pain
The shoulder is the most mobile joint in the human body. The rotator cuff in the shoulder is made up of four tendons that give the shoulder a wide range of motion. Any swelling, inflammation, tearing or bony changes around these tendons can cause pain when a person tries to move the arm in certain directions, as in a golf swing.

Wrist Injuries (sprains, fractured hamate bone, tendonitis)
A sprain is an injury to the ligaments around a joint. Ligaments are strong, flexible fibers that hold bones together. When a ligament is stretched too far or tears, the joint becomes painful and swells.

Tendonitis
Tendonitis is inflammation, irritation, and swelling of a tendon, which is the fibrous structure that joins muscle to bone. In many cases, tendonitis (tendon degeneration) is also present.
Breaks and Fractures
If more pressure is put on a bone than it can stand, it will split or break. A break of any size is called a fracture. A stress fracture is a hairline crack in the bone that develops because of repeated or prolonged forces against the bone. The hamate bone is a small bone on the pinky side of the wrist that has a small prominence called the hook, which juts into the palm. The way most golfers grip their clubs puts the butt-end of the club right up against the hook of the hamate during the swing and can cause a stress fracture.

Sunburn
Apply generous amounts of sunscreen with a sun protection factor (SPF) of at least 30. Pay special attention to your face, nose, ears and arms. The higher the SPF, the greater the protection provided.
- Apply sunscreen 30 minutes prior to sun exposure to allow penetration. Re-apply every 2 hours while you are outdoors.
- Wear a hat. There is also SPF clothing available.
- Wear sunglasses with ultraviolet protection.
- Use a lip balm with sunscreen.

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

Technique
Proper posture and swing mechanics are important for avoiding injury and reducing stress on muscles and joints.

Strength Training
Focus on the core area, which means rotational strength and flexibility of the chest, stomach and back. Also maintain good strength and flexibility in the arms and shoulders.

Flexibility
Flexibility in your wrists, shoulders, legs and core (including the back) is important. Incorporate stretching into your workout and golf routine.

Nutrition
Fuel your body with a meal of protein and carbohydrates two hours before you tee off, then eat a couple of snacks during the round to maintain blood sugar levels. This will provide you with more than enough energy to get you through 18 holes. Drink plenty of fluid both prior to and during your round. Water is best for hydration. Alcohol and caffeine act as diuretics and can cause you to lose water. A doctor or physical therapist can assist you in developing a proper strength, flexibility and nutrition plan.

The AMITA Health Orthopedics Institute is a national leader in musculoskeletal care, offering comprehensive and advanced care for a wide range of conditions. We are proactive about keeping you active. That is why our multi-disciplinary orthopedic teams enlist a comprehensive leading edge approach to the prevention, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of musculoskeletal injuries.

Our team of highly-experienced board-certified physicians, surgeons, therapists and nurses are dedicated to providing patients of all ages with a personalized treatment program that is customized for your condition, lifestyle and personal preferences.

We work hard to prevent sports-related injuries, which have become increasingly more common among athletes, especially children. AMITA Health Sports Medicine Outreach Liaisons keep kids active and participating in the extracurricular activities they enjoy by delivering educational programs and support for parents, coaches and athletes that focus on injury prevention, proper technique and overall athletic care.