



EARLY SPECIALIZATION IN YOUTH SPORTS CAN INCREASE RISK FOR OVERUSE INJURIES

Multi-sport athletes are less likely to experience overuse injuries which occur frequently in youth sports. These injuries are the result of harmful and repetitive musculoskeletal stress through training and competition, often made worse with inadequate rest and recovery. When young athletes specialize in a sport before puberty they may experience repeated high stresses on their bodies during critical times (e.g. during a growth spurt) which may lead to overuse injuries.

Tips for Preventing Overuse Injuries:

- Participate in a balanced training program. Avoid highly repetitive movements when possible and allow plenty of time for recovery.
- Implement pre-season conditioning programs to gradually introduce new skills and slowly increase training workloads.
- Participate in multiple sports to enhance athletic performance, reduce injury risk, and most importantly have fun.

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