

ATHLETE'S EDGE

SPORTS MEDICINE EDUCATION AND INFORMATION FOR WATERLOO REGION

Getting Back Into The Game: *Coping With Injuries*

We have all known of athletes who recover quickly or more successfully, while others seem to take longer than usual. Why does this happen?

Participating in sport has within it a risk of physical injury. As the number of people participating in sport has increased, so too has the number of injuries.

The complex nature of recovering from an injury is of great interest to all of us who are involved with sport. When a hockey player suffers an injury that requires time out of the game and often involves physiotherapy (usually required with a moderate to severe injury). This can be challenging, both physically and mentally.

There are many ways to cope with an injury. While it is difficult to be away from your sport due to injury, there are many things you can actively do to help get you back out on the ice again. I have worked with many injured athletes and health care professionals over the years and

there are some real differences between those athletes who recover more successfully than others. There are probably as many ways to respond and deal with an injury as there are types of

recovering from injuries that have been shown through my work with injured athletes.

Athletes who are more likely to recover successfully have a tendency to be optimistic, motivated, and willing to listen and be involved in the healing process (asking questions about their injury and how to heal, and attending all rehabilitation sessions).

Athletes who have been less successful have a tendency to be negative about their recovery, unmotivated, passive, dwell on their pain, and non-receptive to the recommendations of their health care professionals.

Additionally, many athletes have demonstrated faster recoveries when they use strategies such as goal setting, healing imagery, and positive self-talk.

One of the best ways to cope with rehabilitating from an injury is to take the same energy and positive attitude you bring to hockey



injuries, so athletes have their own individual way of interpreting and reacting to an injury.

There are however, some common themes about successfully

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20 Years Of Sports Medicine Excellence

In October, WSM will celebrate 20 years of providing this community with expert sports medical care. We would like to thank the nearly 50,000 patients and many health professionals who been a part of this success.

Improving Your Hockey Game Through Massage

There are certain types of injuries we associate with playing hockey. Low back spasms and groin pulls make up a large portion of injuries in hockey. The two key muscle groups involved in these muscular strain injuries are the psoas major and gluteus maximus.

The psoas major (or iliopsoas primary) functions are hip flexion (bringing the knee towards the chest), abduction (moving the leg away from the midline of the body) and lateral rotation of the hip (turning the hip outward). The gluteus maximus is our largest butt muscle and is largely responsible for hip extension (bringing the leg back). These motions are the primary motions in skating and thus a decreased

range of motion or tension in any of these muscle groups can lead to pain, discomfort or injury. A therapist trained in sport massage will be able to assess the muscle length and pliability of the psoas and the gluts and identify areas that need attention. Keeping muscles operating in their normal range of motion not only promotes an injury-free season, but also improves your performance!

If you cannot push off on your skates with the maximum extension, then you are losing power on each stride. If your hip flexors are weak then your leg turnover will be low and you will be slower than you should be.

If an injury has already occurred

then use your massage therapist to promote healing in that area. A tight iliopsoas (hip flexor) can create a tilt in your pelvis resulting in low back pain. Just treating the resulting back tension/spasms is only looking at half of the problem (the symptom, not the cause).

Remember: Being proactive and including massage as part of your regular training can provide huge benefits when it comes to improved performances and getting through a season without being sidelined with an injury.

by Lance Dawson, RMT

Lance is a massage therapist at WSM.

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with you to your physiotherapy appointments and your home exercises. What do you have to lose?

The saying 'where your mind goes, everything follows' is a good message to adopt to your recovery. It is certainly difficult to be in pain and possibly not able to participate in the sport you enjoy. This can make you feel as though you do not have any control over your situation. In fact, you actually have a lot of control – over your attitude and your thoughts.

You can choose to take recovering from an injury as a challenge. Athletes are good at challenges – you deal with them all the time in practice and in games.

It is in part about striking a balance, since athletes can also have a tendency to overdo it – in sport and in rehabilitation. We often hear athletes saying that if "this much is good, then more is better" – which is not always the case and this attitude in injury recovery can sometimes set you back further. There is a fine line between pushing yourself and doing too much. Striving in sport is good and necessary in order to improve, but you have to know when to back off in sport and in rehabilitation.

To get healthy and back in the game, keep in mind the "Rule of Toos": Too Much, Too Fast, Too Hard, Too Soon. You need to find the balance between being "game smart" and about not rushing and putting yourself at

risk for hurting yourself.

In the end injuries may happen, but it is not necessarily the injury itself, but how you choose to respond that can make a big difference. Athletes who have recovered successfully and gone back to sport have often told me that while they wish they were never injured, they learned a lot about themselves and how strong and confident they have become. It seems to prepare them to handle difficult challenges and other situations that may come along in sport and in life.

by Jill Tracey, BA, MHK, PhD

Jill is an assistant professor at Wilfrid Laurier University. Her research focuses on psychology of injury and the psychological recovery from injury.

Training Involves More Than On-Ice Work

As the game of hockey grows larger every year, players looking to reach their goals must find a way to get ahead of their competition. The Zone Training is providing players with the following tips for the upcoming hockey season.

1. Train, Train, Train

Work on skills including shooting, puck handling, passing and skating as much as possible. Repetition of skills and muscle memory is the key to success and often players do not focus on their individual skill sets in enough detail to become stronger at their craft.

2. Strength & Conditioning

“Success” only comes before “Work” in the dictionary. Results are not just obtained by training on the ice. Players need to participate in a regular off-ice training program to improve their overall game. Areas of focus should be:

- Balance
- Agility
- Core Strength
- Stretching
- Cardiovascular Conditioning
- Strength Training.

These programs should be developed and supervised by a certified trainer who has experience working with children. When developed

correctly, these programs benefit players of all ages and skill levels.

3. Diet & Nutrition

Players should be eating at least three healthy balanced meals each day that incorporate the following:

- Complex Carbohydrates (grains, pastas, cereals, fiber and starchy vegetables)
- High Quality Protein (lean turkey breast, chicken and tuna)
- Non-Starch Vegetables (most red, green and orange vegetables)
- Simple Carbohydrates (all fruits)
- Nonfat Milk or Soy Milk.

Players should be drinking a minimum of eight glasses of water per day (8 oz. each). Players should stick to water and/or sport drinks during all activities including practices and games.

4. Rest

Players need adequate rest during the hockey season. A general guideline would be for a player to get a minimum of seven to eight hours sleep per night. Sleep deprivation can be detrimental to your on-ice performance in both games and practices.

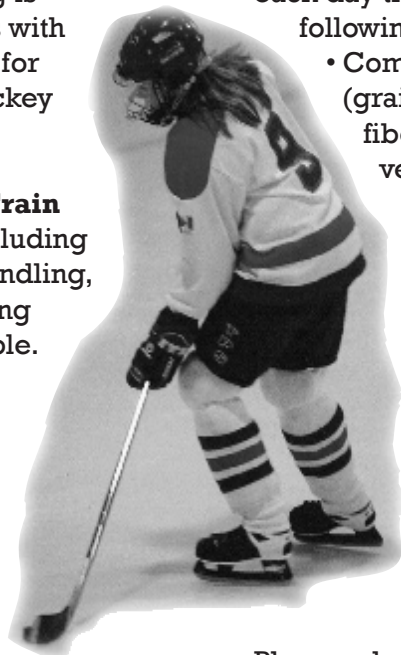
5. Time Management

Hockey players should ensure their schooling is the Number One priority and hockey is secondary. As players get older, especially at the rep levels, becoming a good time manager is key to success.

To reach the higher levels of hockey, players must sometimes sacrifice playing with their friends, watching TV or playing video games to get their homework done so they when they arrive at the rink they can focus on their hockey game or practice.

by Derek Obermeyer

Derek is the Director of Operations for The Zone Training.



The Zone Training offers unique instructor to student ratio for skill specific training for players of all ages. We provide more one-on-one time with instructors to fully develop players' skills and our students have had tremendous achievements based on this philosophy.

The Zone Training with its own 85' by 45' training rink and gym facility can provide dedicated players with a unique training opportunity during the upcoming season.

The Zone is located at 92 Lodge St. Waterloo. For more information on any of the above information or our program offerings please visit us at our website at www.thezone-training.ca or call us at 519-883-PUCK (7825).



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Editor:

Laurie Vandenhoff
laurie@wsm.ca

WSM LOCATIONS:

WSM Location

65 University Ave. E.
Waterloo, ON
N2J 2V9

Clinic Manager:

Mary Lou Sproul

Phone: 519.746.2220

Fax: 519.746.2295

E-mail: info@wsm.ca

WSM at RIM Park

2001 University Ave E.
Waterloo, ON
N2K 4K4

Clinic Manager:

Lisa Hynds-Waddell

Phone: 519.885.5684

Fax: 519.885.6123

E-mail:

wsmrimpark@wsm.ca

**Please visit our
Website:
wsm.ca**

*Since 1986, over
50,000 active athletes
and individuals have
relied on the experi-
ence and expertise
of the medical and
therapy staff of WSM.*



Treating Sports Injuries: Ice Vs. Heat

I am often approached by athletes who do not know when they should use ice or heat after an injury. The answer is not a simple one, but by choosing the right process, these athletes have experienced faster recovery times and they are less likely to re-injure.

Here are some guidelines for helping you make the right decision:

Follow The RICE Principle

R.I.C.E. stands for Rest Ice Compression and Elevation. Follow these steps during the acute phase of an injury. If footwear has to be removed for examination purposes, it is important to apply ice and compression as soon as possible.

As a general rule, any acute (less than two to three days old)

soft tissue injury is best managed by applying ice to the area for a period of 12 to 15 minutes, repeating every one and half to two hours. A number of things can be used to apply cold:

- Crushed ice in a plastic bag
- A cold pack
- A beanbag
- Frozen peas

It is important to choose something that will best conform to the injury site.

To achieve the desired effects of compression, wrap the cold source to the joint using an elastic bandage such as a Tensor bandage, ensuring that the bandage does not restrict circulation.

To minimize the risk of frostbite place a wet towel between the ice pack and the skin. A wet towel also ensures a better outcome of the cold pack, as the

cold can penetrate deeper.

The importance of ice in the first few days following any soft tissue injury is critical in reducing total rehabilitation time.

Soaking the injured area in a hot bath during the acute phase will likely prolong your recovery time. Although it may feel good at the time, applying heat to the injury will exacerbate the inflammatory process and thus increase healing time.

Then Switch To Heat

If swelling persists in the weeks following the initial injury, without an increase in temperature, a combination of ice and heat can be used. Soaking the injured area by alternating between a hot and cold bath, two minutes in each, repeated three times in a row, can help get rid of that last bit of swelling.

Temperatures of 106 F (41 C) and 66F (19 C) are generally safe for the average individual. Please consult a qualified health professional if you have any medical conditions that may be affected by this treatment.

In summary, if the joint is hot and swollen use ice only, regardless of the stage of injury. If you are undecided, ice is often your safer choice. To get rid of that last bit of swelling, use contrast baths. And finally to help loosen stiff muscles heat is acceptable.

*by Mike Clermont, B.Sc.(PT), CAFCI,
RCAMT*

Mike is a registered physiotherapist and manager of WSM at RIM Park.