

# How to treat a sports injury

**Whether you are six or 66, sports are often a big part of enjoying life. Rockland County is full of runners, skaters, gymnasts, tennis players, golfers...you name it and we have it here. Every sport has physical demands that may lead to injury. These days, injury does not always mean stopping your sport.**

Athletes should know their body's usual behavior and tolerances. If you twist or pull a muscle, it usually gets better. One needs to recognize if an injury event is beyond the usual self-healing type. This is the time to choose a sports medicine specialist.

Sports medicine incorporates the physician's knowledge of anatomy, injury healing, rehabilitation, and sometimes surgery. Orthopedic surgeons who have had special training in the sports-specific nature of injury usually practice it.

It takes time and experience to get good at evaluating and treating sports injuries. When can you return to sports? What restrictions should you have? Is it going to heal itself or is a repair the best decision? These are common questions you may need answered. What a sports doctor learns from treating team athletes is knowledge he may use to treat the most amateur among us.

In order to gain experience, a sports physician should have an affiliation with athletic teams. The physicians at Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine in West Nyack are the team doctors for Dominican College, and St. Joe's Regional High School, and they are the northern-based doctors for the Florida Marlins Baseball Team. Each of these doctors has been fellowship trained by national leaders in sports medicine. Each has been published in nationally respected journals. Dr. Kraushaar has been published in 18 journals thus far.

When surgery becomes necessary, the state-of-the art is arthroscopic microsurgery. When it is not necessary to cut through normal tissue or make large incisions, the recovery is quicker, less painful, and eventual performance may be better because of less scarring. If you need surgery in the shoulder, elbow, knee, or ankle, often the arthroscopic technique may be the best choice. The doctors at Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine have done thousands of such cases (combined) and even do hip arthroscopy when indicated.

#### **Here are some things to know:**

- 1.** A good sports medicine program involves rehabilitation therapy, either to avoid surgery or to optimize the outcomes.
- 2.** An experienced orthopedic specialist will know which mix of comfort modalities (heat, ice, electrical stimulation, massage, etc.) and exercise (strengthening, stretching, endurance, sport-specific drills) are best for you.
- 3.** The doctor should be comfortable speaking with the athlete, his trainer, the physical therapist, and in the case of children, the parents about the progress of recovery.
- 4.** It is important to be able to reach your sports doctor when you need to. Because Advanced Orthopedics and Sports Medicine is local, the doctors can meet you in the office five days a week and can help you on weekends, when weekend-warriors need it the most. This group, including Drs. Kraushaar, Fond and Popowitz, is made of doctors who have a passion for sport and who are proud to serve our local community. They are loyal to our hospitals, our teams and our athletes.

## Did You Know?

**Sports doctors are particularly good at zooming in on your injury for the extent of its severity right away. They know specific clues in your history and physical exam that most efficiently reflects your diagnosis.**

**Resource: American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons,  
[www.aaos.org](http://www.aaos.org)**