



## GUIDE TO FIELD HOCKEY INJURY PREVENTION

The modern game of field hockey is played in 132 countries around the world and is second only in popularity to soccer as a team sport. Epidemiological studies have consistently shown that injuries in field hockey are numerous and can be serious. Most serious injuries result from being struck by the stick or the ball.

- It is estimated that 15 percent of hockey players are injured during a single season, and that injuries cause players to spend 11 percent of the total hockey season training and playing at less than full capacity.
- Strains are the most common type of injury, followed by sprains, overuse injuries, fractures, and contusions.
- The body areas most commonly injured are the ankle, followed by back, knee, thigh, upper extremity, shin, and groin.
- ACL injuries mainly occur in plant and cut moves or one-leg landings without direct contact with other players.

### INJURY PREVENTION MEASURES

- **The National Athletic Trainers' Association suggests that high school athletes engage in conditioning training at least six weeks before the start of practice.**
- **Previous injury is the most important risk factor for injury.** Do not return to play too soon. Follow your doctor's recommendations. Your team needs its players on the field, not on the sidelines.
- **Proper Warm-Up is essential to injury prevention.**
- **Proper strength training will decrease injuries.**
  - Learning to squat, jump, land, change direction, and balance will help prevent knee and ankle injuries.
  - Performing specific hamstring and groin exercises will help prevent pulls to these areas.
- **Use properly fitting cleats, shin guards, and mouth guards. Goalkeepers should wear throat protection.**
- **All field hockey players should undergo at least a pre-season fitness screening for general strength, flexibility and endurance.**
- **Coaches and officials must enforce rules aimed at preventing dangerous use of the hockey stick and careless play of the ball.**
- **Make sure first aid is available at all games and practices.**