



REHAB PROTOCOL INFLAMMATORY & OVERUSE INJURIES

We recommend the following four-pronged approach to treating your/your child's condition.

1. RELATIVE REST

All inflammatory conditions benefit from some period of relative rest. The term 'relative' is used, because the amount of rest is different for every patient/athlete. Some will need to shut down their activity to a large degree, and sit out from sports, for 1-3 weeks. Others can simply decrease the number of hours of activity per week.

A patient's symptoms, or pain, will be the best guide for how much rest to pursue. If the pain is getting worse, it's probably time to take a more prolonged break. If the other measures utilized below make the symptoms better or tolerable, it may be reasonable to keep playing, without a period of prolonged rest. Patients and families need to use their own judgment, since only they know how much their symptoms are affecting them and how extensive the schedule of activity is.

2. FREQUENT ICING

Use of ice, or cryotherapy, is very underrated and extremely effective at controlling inflammation and speeding up the healing process in the face of inflammatory or overuse conditions. This has been shown in the medical literature in the care of various conditions, and at all levels of sports, from youth leagues to pro athletes. The basic principles of icing are as follows:

- 30 minutes on, 30 minutes off: One really can't ice an area 'too much', except for leaving ice on the skin for too long. Therefore, multiple times per day is beneficial, but longer than 30 minutes is not advisable, as there is a risk of frostbit to the skin.
- "There's no time in my schedule": One doesn't need to set aside dedicated time for icing. A 6-inch ace wrap or tight-fitting, stretchy clothing can be used to place an ice pack on the affected area but remain mobile; you can ice while walking around the house, on the way to school/work, etc. For maximum benefit, try to set a schedule for

when ice will be used in the midst of common activities in one's daily schedule (e.g. during meals, homework, TV, etc).

- "How long do I have to keep this up?": Ice continues to be beneficial as long as there's healing occurring. If your/your child's symptoms/pain are still present, then ice will continue to help. It's not uncommon for pro athletes with various inflammatory conditions to use ice most days of their life for entire seasons of competition; this is one of the reasons they bounce back so fast and 'stay in the game'.

3. NON-STEROIDAL ANTI-INFLAMMATORY MEDICATIONS (NSAIDs)

A "treatment dose regimen" of anti-inflammatories is a slightly different use of common medicines (e.g. Ibuprofen/Motrin/Advil or Naproxyn/Naprosyn/Alleve) than that with which most people are familiar. In other words, the below doses are not designed specifically to help pain, as it arises, but instead are designed to try to eliminate localized inflammation permanently by maintaining a steady state of medicine in one's blood stream. The following doses are extremely safe, PROVIDED THEY ARE TAKEN WITH MEALS. If one develops stomach irritation or has an underlying condition that makes the safety of an anti-inflammatory medicine unclear, please hold off on taking these medicine and contact your primary care doctor. Take ONE of the following two medicines, but not both.

RECOMMENDED DOSES:

IBUPROFEN/MOTRIN/ADVIL 400 / 600 / 800 mg TWO TIMES PER DAY WITH MEALS x3-4 weeks (EITHER/OR, but not both) NAPROSYN/NAPROXYN/ALLEVE: 220 / 440 mg TWO TIMES PER DAY WITH MEALS x3-4 weeks

4. PHYSICAL THERAPY EXERCISES

A prescription will be given to take to the physical therapy center of your choosing. This will allow for supervision in performing stretching and strengthening exercises designed to help protect and support the affected area and reduce the loads that it is seeing and allow for healing. However, PT is just a guide for what should be done on one's own at home or in the gym multiple times per week. With virtually all inflammatory conditions, the more dedicated a patient is to the stretching and



strengthening over time, the more likely a full recovery and return to all activities can be anticipated. Remember, this is a chronic condition that arose over time, so it requires a 'chronic' solution; once the pain goes away, it doesn't mean that's the time to stop the stretching and strengthening. Rather, the exercises will help prevent recurrence in the future.