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Injury Prevention Soccer Specific Warm-Up

Injury Prevention

Injuries occur in any sporting event. Injury prevention exercises require an emphasis on form and function. Injury prevention exercises focus on muscular balance and muscular patterning. With all injury prevention exercises the most important aspect is to be “Form Perfect”. There are figures and images attached to this document that will clarify the correct form for the performance of the injury prevention portion of the warm-up. An integral part of any injury prevention program is early diagnosis and correction of biomechanical errors and mechanical disturbances. These can manifest with or without pain.

Warm-Up

Warm-up is an important aspect of injury prevention and improved performance. The goal of a warm up is to prepare the body for exercise. It should consist of both general and specific exercises¹. These exercises should combine upper body and lower body combined movements with the overall goal of warming the tissue and preparing the cardiovascular and nervous systems for sport. Warm-up is an ideal place to insert injury prevention exercises as they improve muscular imbalances, movement dysfunctions, and immediately work to increase muscular activity and increase the blood flow to the muscle.

There are several components in a sport specific warm-up. Firstly we need to look at the overall demands of the sport that we are warming up for. Soccer requires very strenuous physical demands on the athlete. There is a combination of jogging, sprinting, changing of directions, striking a ball, and physical contact. With all of these varying demands on the body during a soccer game it is important to integrate similar demands into the warm-up.

Soccer Specific Warm up (15mins)

- The beginning of any warm up requires 3-5 minutes of gradual warm up at a low level (eg. Light jog, walking soccer, juggling)
- 5 mins of gradually increasing speed work
 - start at 50% speed and gradually build up to 75%
 - work at acceleration/deceleration(speed up/slow down on your say)

1. P. Brukener, K. Khan, Clinical Sports Medicine 2nd Ed. 2002. McGraw-Hill Co. Australia, pp 84

- work at direction change/cutting(start with planned direction changes move to making direction changes random)
- keep distances short with short bouts of rest (distances no more than 20m rest of approximately 10-20sec)
- 3 mins movement preparation/Injury prevention exercises
 - Squatting (Fig 1)
 - Lunging (Fig 2)
 - Hopping (Fig 3)
 - Jumping (Fig 4)
 - Rotating (Fig 5)
 - Leg Swings (Fig 6)
- 3 mins soccer specific ball work at 85-90% intensity

After the warm up the players should all be warm and sweating without feeling fatigued!

Fig 1 (Squat)



The most important form aspect of the squat is to maintain good knee alignment over the second toe.

Fig 2 (Lunge)



When Performing a lunge be sure that knees are stacked over top of the toes. Back should remain in a neutral position

Fig 3 (One foot Hop)



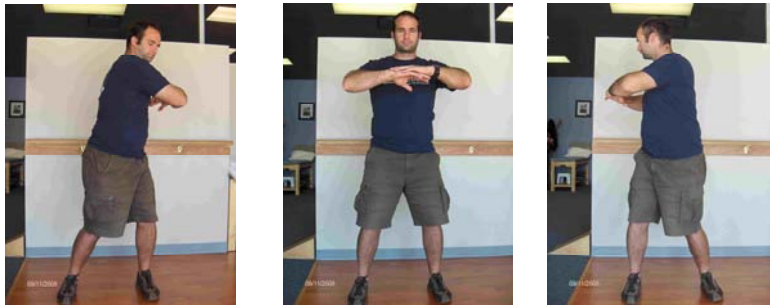
It is most important that the landing be soft and that the knee maintain alignment over the second toe on the take off and landing.

Fig 4 (Two Foot Jump)



Take off should be done in a symmetrical fashion with good knee/ hip alignment, as should landing

Fig 5 (Rotation)



Rotations should be performed with a neutral knee position with release of the back knee and maintenance of good alignment on rotation side.

Fig 6 (Standing Leg Swing)



When swinging the leg the hips should remain neutral with very minimal tilting forwards or backwards. Movement should be performed through range that can be obtained without pelvic movement.