

Golf injury prevention



Many golf injuries can be prevented. Most golf injuries are a result of:

- A lack of conditioning
- Poor swing mechanics
- Gripping the club wrong
- Too many hours of practice and rounds

What are common golf injuries?

- Lower back pain
- Elbow pain
- Shoulder pain
- Wrist pain

How can I prevent golf injuries?

- Have a good warm-up program. This prepares your body for golf. It should be a total body program. Warm-ups should use moving stretches (dynamic stretches) and include arm, leg and back muscles.
- Have a good strengthening program. Strengthen upper and lower body muscles. Use good form to prevent overuse injuries.
- Do drills that challenge your balance and body control.
- Include jumping and agility drills. These work on burst-like movements (plyometrics).
- Wear well-fitted safety gear. This means:
 - Golf shoes
 - Clubs that fit the player
 - Sun protection
- Drink plenty of water 30 minutes before practicing or playing. Drink both water and sports drinks during games and practices. Only drink sports drinks if practice or games are more than 90 minutes.
- Know how to use body mechanics when lifting and carrying golf bags. Use a hand cart to help, if needed.
- Learn correct golf swings.

What can I do before the season starts?

Golfers need a pre-season plan to help get their bodies ready. Start the program at least 4 weeks before the season starts. Pre-season plans include:

- Flexibility
- Strength
- Balance and coordination
- Endurance
- Agility
- Special golf skills
- Learning how to swing a club correctly

How should I warm up?

It is important to warm up. A basic warm-up should take 15 to 25 minutes.

- Start with 5 minutes of light aerobic activity. This raises the heart rate and warms up muscles.
- Do 10 minutes of dynamic stretches. Stretch your arms, legs and back.
- Finish with 10 minutes of full speed swings using the various clubs.
- At the end of a practice or round:
 - Spend time stretching your whole body.
 - Hold each stretch for at least 30 seconds.
 - Stretch for 10 to 15 minutes.

This handout is for information purposes only. It does not replace medical advice from a qualified doctor or physical therapist. Cook Children's Medical Center will not be responsible for any harm or injury resulting from interpretation of the materials.