



SEVEN TIPS TO COPE WITH THE EMOTIONAL STRESS OF AN INJURY

Physical injuries are often stressful events. The physical pain can be difficult enough to deal with, but it's important to remember that injuries can often come with emotional and mental stress, as well. Especially in athletes or highly-active individuals, the stress of an injury can be increased by negative emotions and thoughts.

Because of this, it's important to learn ways to deal with not only the physical pain and rehabilitation but also the stress that accompanies an injury. Here are a few tips that can help:

1. Educate yourself

Often injury-related anxiety can be caused by not understanding your injury. Be sure to ask the questions that you feel you need answered. Examples of these questions could be:

- What is my diagnosis and what type of injury do I have?
- What is my recovery time? Should I expect lasting symptoms?
- What kind of physical rehabilitation will I be in? What should I expect?
- Can I work out and exercise while injured?
- Are there modified workouts I can do?
- What symptoms should I look for if I feel my injury is worsening?

2. Accept responsibility

Being injured means being part of a recovery process. No matter how long that recovery may be, it's important to take responsibility over it. By accepting your injury and recovery, you can feel more in control of the process. This can help you understand that while you might not perform at your pre-injury level, you control your recovery outcome.

3. Maintain positivity

Keeping a positive attitude is not always easy, and in fact, it's easy to have negative thoughts and emotions after an injury—no matter how significant the lifestyle change that comes with it is. But, it's important to not let negativity affect your recovery process. Continue to be positive, show up to appointments and treatments and follow the recommendations of your doctors and/or physical therapists.

4. Be mindful

Being mindful of your injury can help you heal more quickly. Research has begun to show that imagining where you want to be, along with your desired recovery outcomes, can help the healing process.

James N. Johnson, MD, FAAFP, CAQSM

28 White Bridge Pike ■ Suite 207 ■ Nashville, Tennessee 37205 ■ 615.467.4636 ■ www.OurAdvancedSportsMedicine.com
Board-Certified, Family Medicine ■ Board-Certified, Sports Medicine ■ Certified ImPACT Concussion Consultant

5. Get support

Don't isolate yourself from friends, teammates or coaches during your injury. This is a common response but one that does not help your recovery. You shouldn't have to go through your injury alone, so go to practice, games and talk to others about your injury. Knowing you have support from others can be a comfort during recovery.

6. Set goals

Work with your doctor and/or physical therapist to set realistic goals for yourself during your injury. It's important not to try to do too much, too soon, so knowing your limits is crucial to any recovery process. Setting small, attainable goals during your recovery can help you stay motivated and improve confidence. Instead of viewing your injury as a setback, imagine it as more training, which you would normally set goals for, and focus on setting healing goals.

7. Maintain wellness during injury

Talk with your doctor or therapist about training or exercises you can do during your injury. These will depend on the severity of your injury but can help you stay positive throughout recovery. Maintaining your fitness level is important during an injury, so it's important to find ways to maintain your wellness. Relaxation and mindfulness are important aspects of wellness that can be worked on throughout recovery.

With support, proper motivation and patience, recovery is possible. Goal setting, knowing limits and alternate training can help athletes recover from injuries quickly and achieve positive recovery outcomes. Be sure to talk to your doctor about your recovery plans and treatment for your injury.

Please call our office at 615.467.4636 if you have any questions or concerns.

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