

INJURY PREVENTION FOR SWIMMERS

Shoulder injuries are typical in swimmers and can affect all ages and ability levels. However, competitive swimmers are more likely to sustain overuse injuries in the shoulder and preventing these injuries is key. Doctors and physical therapists can help swimmers understand proper strokes to help prevent shoulder injuries in swimmers.

What is wrong with my stroke?

There are some common but incorrect techniques that could be causing your injury. Holding your head too high or “snaking” your body instead of rotating during a freestyle stroke are some common mistakes. Your doctor can demonstrate corrections to these mistakes and work with your coach or physical therapist to implement new preventative techniques.

What happens if I’m already injured?

While prevention is always preferred, that doesn’t mean that existing shoulder injuries can’t be treated. Working with your doctor and physical therapist, you can learn rehabilitation techniques and exercises to prevent a recurrence in your injury.

How are shoulder injuries diagnosed?

A thorough history and examination will be performed by your doctor. For competitive swimmers, a detailed description of training routines, techniques and changes in intensity of activity are needed to evaluate the injury. After ruling out other diagnoses, your doctor may recommend an MRI or other imaging studies to aid in diagnosis.

What are treatment options?

A physical rehabilitation program is necessary for proper recovery and prevention. Working with your doctor, coach and/or physical therapist, a treatment plan will be recommended with strengthening, flexibility and stabilization exercises.

Strengthening of the core and upper body are essential in preventing shoulder injuries, along with regular stretching to improve range of motion.

Source: Swimming Biomechanics and Injury Prevention: New Stroke Techniques and Medical Considerations

If you have any questions or concerns, please call our office at 615.467.4636.