



TOP 5 TIPS FOR E-TOWN ATHLETES

The ETHS Sports Medicine Team documented a total of 491 injuries last year – **OUCH!** Don't become a statistic! Here are some tips to keep you in the game this year...

1. Get in shape BEFORE your season starts.

*Start working out at least a few weeks before try-outs...if you haven't done a thing since last year and go straight into full practices you're in for a world of hurt. Doing too much, too soon puts you at risk for many overuse injuries; this includes everything from tennis elbow to patellar tendinitis. By gradually building up your fitness level, you'll impress your coaches AND manage to stay out of the training room. **Just remember – slow and steady is the key.***

2. Eat like an athlete.

Think about this: an average teen burns about 2000 calories a day just sitting around; a very active teen (a.k.a. varsity athlete) can burn between 3000-4000 calories a day. That's a big difference, so make sure you fill the gap. How do you do it? Here are some ideas:

- ***Always eat breakfast. We mean it.***
- ***Bring a few small snacks to eat throughout the day or before practice.***
- ***Plan ahead. Make your lunch the night before and put it someplace where you won't forget it the next morning.***
- ***Trying to gain some weight Talk to an ETHS nutritionist to create a meal plan that meets your needs.***
- ***Don't forget to hydrate! Drink plenty of fluids the night before practice or competition, and bring your water-bottle to class the next day.***
- ***You are what you eat. Go easy on the fast food and grab some veggies for a change.***

3. Buy your shoes from an expert.

*Get a gait analysis at a specialty shoe store, like Fleet Feet, Murphy's Fit, or Runner's Edge. These people know feet! By watching the way you stand, walk, and run, they can find out which shoes will provide you with the best support. If they don't carry your sport specific shoe (e.g. volleyball shoes, cleats), they can still give you good advice on what to look for in a shoe and where to find it, and can provide you with great arch support products. **When you've got the right support, you're less likely to suffer from chronic injuries such as shin splints, plantar fasciitis, or stress fractures.***

4. Take a day off.

*There's a reason why your coach gives you Sunday off. It gives you time to catch up on homework, spend time with family, and also let your body recover. For all of you athletes who plan on playing club while you're in season, take note: exercise causes changes in the body such as muscle tissue breakdown, depletion of energy stores, and fluid loss. Recovery time allows these stores to be replenished and for tissue repair to occur. Without time to repair and replenish, the body will continue to breakdown from intensive exercise. **That's right...continuous exercise can actually weaken even the strongest athletes. So, take it easy on your day off.***

5. Be pro-active.

*We all know you can play through pain, but should you? If something doesn't feel right, if it's more than just sore, don't wait to get it checked out. Waiting too long can make a simple injury way more complicated. For example, if those shin splints just aren't going away, you might be running your way toward a stress fracture. **The sooner you find out what's going on, the sooner we can help you fix it, and the sooner you're back in the game.***

GO KITS!

Lucy Lipton, MS, ATC
Accelerated Rehab Centers
Evanston Township High School
Phone: 847-424-7373
lwalsh@acceleratedrehab.com