

## Keeping Student Athletes On The Field And Injury-free

use injuries, especially in pre-teen and teenage athletes. Adults have those too, but as kids we worry about overuse injuries because of the effect it may have on their long-term growth and their athletic potential. For example, if you throw too many pitches, you can hurt the growth plate in your elbow. And if you damage that growth plate, you may not make it to a career in pitching because the elbow may not grow right and you won't be able to generate the force to be an accurate and a powerful, pain-free pitcher.

Something that seems so small and subtle when you're young, depending on what your goals are as an athlete, can have really far-reaching outcomes. Kids shouldn't be playing through pain. It is imperative that bodies, especially growing bodies, have adequate time to rest and refuel. Another one that's been an epidemic is ACL (anterior cruciate ligament) injuries. We're seeing them more commonly in females and more

commonly in non-contact situations, such as playing soccer or basketball, and there's no collision — she just went to cut to get the ball and her ACL tore.

A lot of it is mechanics and not having the strength that we need in our core, glutes, muscles and legs. They're not moving, jumping or landing in the way they should, so they twist their knee and tear their ACL. Non-contact ACL injuries are highly preventable with strength and movement training.

The last thing would be concussion. It's not a new diagnosis, but we're more alert to it. That awareness has benefited those who have sustained a concussion, because now we have earlier interventions and therapies.

When I was growing up, no one would have ever proposed to go to PT for your concussion. They'd maybe even tell you to go out and play soccer again the same day that you got hurt. We don't ever do that anymore. We rest the student, assist them with school

work? coping strategies, actively treat their symptoms, and gradually exercise and test athletes before we let them back on the court or field.

Interestingly, the pendulum is swinging toward earlier return to school and to light activity; not to get you on the soccer or football field right away, but to actually get you back in school, or walking on a treadmill or exerting in a rehab gym to reduce your symptoms, so we can rehab you in an active way. Those are some of the hottest topics for us, but the list could go on and on.

### What sports do you play?

What don't I play? I grew up a typical Hawaii kid, doing island sports — soccer, surfing, paddling. When I left for college I became a rower. In med school, I fell in with a group of friends who were triathletes, and I also do hiking, biking, and I still surf.

### Can you talk about your volunteer

work?

I'm a team doctor for Roosevelt and Kailua high schools, and Hawaii Baptist Academy. On the collegiate level, I do the same for HPU and Chaminade. If you're going to understand and help a patient, you need to be where those injuries occur. Sports injuries are scary for the parent and the athlete. If you can be on the sidelines and available by phone, it helps the athletic trainers, and supports the schools, the family unit, and the athletes. In football season, we're in the training rooms and we stand on the football fields on the sidelines. We cover soccer tournaments. We covered the high school state championships this year for beach volleyball, soccer, judo and wrestling. We also get out in the community. I've given talks to parents and coaches on concussions, sharing little nuggets that can be useful for the athlete as far as preventing and treating injuries. Our mission is to give back, for instance,

by going to schools or sports clubs and giving talks in the community. I do the same for medical residents in training and for doctors in the community.

### Anything else you'd like to mention?

One of the neatest things we've done recently is being at The Queen's Medical Center-West Oahu. The whole west side of the island had limited access to specialty care. In early 2014, we came there with our sports medicine program. That's been very fulfilling to me, bringing access to care in specialized medicine to people who haven't had much access.

For more information, contact Queen's Center for Sports Medicine at 691-4449 or go to [queensmedical-center.org/sports-medicine](http://queensmedical-center.org/sports-medicine).

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