

In Step

"Too" Syndrome

by Dr. Arthur Lukoff, D.P.M.

Now that spring has finally arrived, we can indulge in all our favorite sporting activities. We love to run, bike, golf, and hit home runs for our softball teams, but all that sports activity accounts for a big chunk of the nation's pain. According to Stanford University Medical Center, one in five persons blamed a sports injury for their pain.

At the recreational level – the level most of us perform at – most pain is caused by the "Too" syndrome.

People run too much, play too long, and come back too soon after an injury. Most sports medicine physicians reject the old school slogan of "No pain no gain." The new mantra is "The best way is less pain, more gain."

At the simplest level, sports pain can be divided into two levels – acute and chronic. Acute is when you step into a hole and sprain your ankle. It is traumatic and immediate, with loss of movement of the injured part.

Chronic is harder to define. It is usually the result of overuse, or a significant change in the amount of training the athlete is doing. I have always divided chronic training pain into three types:

Pain develops after activity is over – the least severe type of overuse pain and usually occurs when starting an activity or increasing the amount of activity. This can be treated with a better warm-up and better cool down. Treat the injured area with ice and an anti-inflammatory.

Pain develops during the activity, but allows you to continue with the activity – this is a more serious type of injury. Along with the treatment for the first chronic pain add Relative Rest. All this means that if your pain starts at a certain point in the activity, cut back the activity for several days to a point before the pain starts. The easiest example to understand is walking. If you get leg or hip pain after ¼ mile, only walk for ⅛ mile for a week and then try ¼ mile again.

The third and most severe chronic pain is when you cannot do the activity at all due to the pain. This is the time to refrain from the activity and try an alternative, such as bike riding. You also may want to seek professional help to treat your injury.

There is also a danger from over-using over-the-counter medications. You can cause kidney damage by taking too much ibuprofen.

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TaxTips

AMENDED RETURNS

Q. I filed my 2003 tax return on time. I forgot, however, to include income from a part-time job. What do I do now?

A. You need to amend your 2003 return by filing Form 1040X. You may owe a little more tax, or you may get a small refund, depending on how much you earned and how much tax was withheld.

An amended return can be filed for a variety of reasons. For example, if you remember a deductible expense after your return has been filed, you can amend a return to correct the error and receive a net refund. Generally, you have three years from the due date of your return to file an amendment. If you filed a state return, you may have to amend it too.



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