GP resource

360 PHYSIO REVESBY

# Managing Adolescent Injuries with Physiotherapy

**Adolescents and children are typically involved in lots of physical activity both at school and on the weekends.**

It is not uncommon for children to participate in 2-3 sports at any one time, in addition to running around at school. This high level of physical activity places load on developing structures in the body increasing the risk of injury. This risk increases during periods of rapid growth as muscle flexibility and joint range reduce and physical load increases. During this growth phase, balance and coordination are also underdeveloped, further increasing the chance of injury.

In Australia, studies indicate that 57% of injuries sustained by adolescents aged 16-17 were caused by playing sports, with sprains and strains making up 52% of those injuries.

## Common adolescent injuries and conditions include:

- Osgood-Schlatter disease (knee pain)
- Sever's disease (heel pain)
- patellofemoral pain syndrome (knee cap pain)
- shoulder instability
- lower back pain
- anterior cruciate ligament (ACL)

**At 360 Physio Revesby, we know that early diagnosis and treatment is a game changer. It allows patients to be free of pain faster and also minimises the likelihood of chronic issues developing. So don't delay we can help!**

GP resource

360 PHYSIO REVESBY

## Contributing Factors

There are several key factors that contribute to adolescent injuries including:

1. **the repeated overuse of muscle groups or joints, leading to chronic cramps, tears and strains**
2. **Poor coordination due to muscle imbalances can lead to an increased likelihood of a sudden or direct impact leading to an awkward movement, fall or landing**
3. **joint hypermobility, where the joints easily move beyond normal expected ranges**
4. **structural abnormalities or reduced flexibility**
5. **poor warm-up or lack of fitness, strength or technique**
6. **fatigue, poor nutrition or inadequate hydration**
7. **substandard footwear, equipment and facilities**
8. **inadequate supervision and coaching**

## Symptoms and Treatment

A sports injury, usually a muscle strain or sprain of the joint, tendon or ligament, can be recognised by:

- **cramping pain**
- **aching after activity**
- **lack of joint function**
- **swelling and bruising**
- **heat and redness at the injury site**

It is important that injuries to adolescents are identified and diagnosed early in order to minimise the likelihood of long term issues. Early referral to a physiotherapist is crucial in identifying the type of injury and not only resolving pain but addressing the underlying biomechanical causative factors that adolescents will have.

An adolescent's return to sport or activity will be determined by the type and degree of injury sustained. The underlying biomechanical issues including muscle flexibility, strength and coordination must also be addressed prior to returning to sport. Treatment will include appropriate manual therapy, strengthening and stretching programs, home or gym-based exercises and occasionally taping or orthotics if required.

## Patient Outcomes

At **360 Physio Revesby,** our treatment philosophy is to Remove, Restore and Redefine. Our experienced physiotherapists are highly knowledgeable in the specific demands of sport and expertly trained in injury management for adolescents. We will work with your patients to develop an individualised rehabilitation program that will ensure their safe return to sport and minimise the likelihood of further injury.

Contact us to find out more about how we can help your patients reach their potential. (02) 9774 2530

Brett St Medical Precinct, Suite 2, Level 1 Corner Macarthur Ave & Brett St REVESBY 2212 | P (02) 9774 2530 | W 360physiorevesby.com.au

## References


- Australian Physiotherapy Association. Clinical content contributed by APA physiotherapist David Spurrier https://choose.physio/your-lifestage/adolescents/sporting-injuries-adolescents
- Huguenin, L. (2016). 'Paediatric sports injuries' Australian Family Physician Volume 45, Issue 7 https://www.racgp.org.au/afp/2016/july/paediatric-sports-injuries
- Evans-Whipp, T., & Vassallo, S. (2021). 'Adolescent Injury' Growing Up in Australia Snapshot Series - Issue 3. Melbourne: Australian Institute of Family Studies https://growingupinaustralia.gov.au/research-findings/snapshots/adolescent-injury