

Staying Safe on The Court

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The Top 3 Pickleball Injuries

Pickleball, a sport beloved for its accessibility and camaraderie, has experienced a surge in popularity in recent years. As players of all ages flock to the courts to enjoy the fast-paced action, it's important to be aware of the potential risks lurking amidst the excitement: pickleball injuries. From sprains to strains, these injuries can put a damper on your game—and even sideline you from play altogether. Let's take a closer look at the top three pickleball injuries and how you can prevent them.

Ankle Sprains

Ankle sprains are among the most common injuries in pickleball, often occurring when players make sudden changes in direction or land awkwardly after jumping for a shot. The lateral movement and quick footwork required in pickleball make the ankles particularly vulnerable to sprains. Symptoms of an ankle sprain include pain, swelling, bruising, and difficulty bearing weight on the affected ankle.

Prevention Tip: To reduce your risk of ankle sprains, invest in supportive footwear with good ankle support and traction. Additionally, practice strengthening exercises for the muscles around the ankles to improve stability and reduce the likelihood of injury.

Tennis Elbow (Lateral Epicondylitis)

Tennis elbow, or lateral epicondylitis, is a common overuse injury that can affect pickleball players, especially those who frequently use a backhand grip. This condition is characterized by pain and tenderness on the outside of the elbow, often exacerbated by gripping and swinging motions. In pickleball, repetitive movements such as swinging the paddle can strain the tendons in the elbow, leading to inflammation and discomfort.

Prevention Tip: To prevent tennis elbow, focus on proper technique and grip strength. Avoid overexertion during play and take regular breaks to rest and stretch your arms and wrists. If you experience persistent elbow pain, consult a healthcare professional for proper diagnosis and treatment.

Shoulder Injuries

Shoulder injuries are another common complaint among pickleball players, particularly those who engage in overhead shots like serves and smashes. The repetitive overhead motion can put strain on the muscles and tendons surrounding the shoulder joint, leading to conditions such as rotator cuff tendinitis and impingement syndrome. Symptoms may include pain, weakness, and limited range of motion in the shoulder.

Prevention Tip: To protect your shoulders from injury, focus on maintaining proper form and posture during overhead shots. Warm up your shoulders before play with dynamic stretches and exercises, and incorporate strengthening exercises targeting the muscles of the rotator cuff and shoulder girdle into your fitness routine.

Summary

While pickleball injuries are an unfortunate reality for many players, they can often be prevented with proper precautions and technique. By taking steps to protect yourself on the court and listening to your body's warning signs, you can minimize your risk of injury and continue enjoying the thrill of pickleball for years to come. So, stay safe, play smart, and keep the pickleball injuries at bay—your game will thank you for it!



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