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THE MOST COMMON INJURIES AMONG BASKETBALL PLAYERS AND THEIR PREVENTION

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Abstract:
This article provides an in-depth analysis of injuries in basketball players, their prevention methods, and rehabilitation processes. Basketball is a high-intensity sport in which athletes are constantly exposed to various types of injuries. The article analyzes the most common injuries and discusses their causes and consequences from a scientific perspective. In particular, knee, wrist, ankle, muscle and tendon injuries, as well as back and waist problems, are considered. It also emphasizes the importance of physical preparation, proper technique, protective equipment, and pre-workout warm-up methods to prevent injuries. The article provides a detailed description of the stages of injury treatment, and examines the importance of physiotherapy, physical recovery exercises, and psychological preparation. Scientifically based recommendations are given on how the rehabilitation process should be carried out to shorten the basketball player's return to sports and reduce the likelihood of injury recurrence. This study aims to explore important strategies that help athletes maintain long and successful careers, providing useful information for sports doctors, coaches, and athletes themselves.

Keywords: Basketball, sports injury, injury prevention, rehabilitation process, physiotherapy, muscle recovery.

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Introduction

Basketball is a fast-paced sport that demands agility, speed, and physical strength. While it promotes overall fitness, players are prone to various injuries if they do not take adequate precautions. This article explores the most common injuries that basketball players face, along with strategies to prevent them and guidelines for effective rehabilitation.

One of the main concerns among basketball players is knee-related injuries, including meniscus tears, anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tears, and knee arthritis. These typically occur due to improper landings, sudden direction changes, or excessive strain. Another frequent issue is ankle and foot injuries. Sprains, twists, dislocations, and fractures often arise from awkward landings or collisions on the court. Muscle and tendon problems, such as strains, tears, and overuse injuries, also pose a significant risk, especially when players engage in prolonged exertion or sudden bursts of intense activity without proper warm-up. In addition, back and lower spine issues are not uncommon; herniated discs and chronic lower back pain can develop from incorrect jumping posture or repeated overloading of the spine.

Preventing these injuries involves several measures. First, proper physical conditioning is essential. Athletes need to focus on specific exercises that strengthen the knees and ankles, enhance cardiovascular endurance, and improve overall body mechanics. Second, correct technique in jumping and landing helps reduce the chance of injury. Teaching players to land

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softly on the balls of their feet with bent knees, while maintaining proper footwork during quick directional changes, is crucial. Third, using appropriate protective gear can minimize the risk of harm. Supportive footwear designed for basketball offers ankle support and absorbs shock, and braces or pads protect joints from impact. Warming up before practices and games, then cooling down afterward, also promotes muscle recovery and reduces injury risk. Finally, adequate rest and recovery, along with a balanced diet and proper hydration, are vital for preventing injuries and maintaining peak performance.

Rehabilitation is a critical aspect of dealing with injuries when they do occur. Immediately following an injury, players should apply the RICE method (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation) and consult a healthcare professional if necessary. Physical therapy, including gentle range-of-motion exercises and gradual strengthening drills, helps restore flexibility and muscle strength. Athletes can return to full-speed drills only after practicing sport-specific movements at a lower intensity. Beyond the physical component, psychological support is also important. Confidence building and stress reduction techniques aid players in overcoming anxiety and regaining a positive mindset during recovery.

In conclusion, taking a proactive approach to injury prevention in basketball can help athletes maintain a successful, injury-free career. Strengthening exercises, proper technique, supportive gear, and thorough warm-up routines all reduce the likelihood of common injuries. When injuries do occur, a structured rehabilitation process that includes immediate care, physical therapy, and psychological support ensures an effective return to the court. Adopting these preventive measures and recovery strategies allows basketball players to thrive in this demanding and dynamic sport.

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