

# THE YOUNG SOCCER ATHLETE PREVENTING INJURIES

## INJURY RATES

- The American Academy of Pediatrics reports that injury rates, per 1000 player hours, range from 0.6 to 19.1, depending on the level of play and definition of injury.
- Poor muscular strength has been associated with higher rates of injury in age-matched players.

## COMMON INJURIES INCLUDE

Patellofemoral Pain Syndrome	▶ Pain located in the front of the knee surrounding the kneecap; largely attributed to overuse and malalignment of the hip, knee, and ankle
Anterior cruciate ligament (ACL) tears	▶ Occurs during non-contact maneuvers that involve changing direction, landing a jump, or pivoting with extended knee
Concussion	▶ A change in brain function following a force to the head, which may be accompanied by temporary loss of consciousness
Signs of Concussion	▶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Appearing dazed/confused</li><li>• Change in behavior or personality</li><li>• Moving clumsily</li><li>• Speaking slowly</li></ul>
Symptoms reported	▶ <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Headache/"pressure" in head</li><li>• Nausea/vomiting</li><li>• Confusion</li></ul>

## NEW GUIDELINES "HEADING THE BALL"

- IN RESPONSE TO THE LARGE NUMBER OF CONCUSSIONS IN YOUTH SOCCER, IN 2015 US SOCCER ISSUED NEW GUIDELINES FOR HEADING THE BALL—NOT ALLOWED FOR PLAYERS 10 OR UNDER IN PRACTICE/GAMES; PLAYERS 11-13 ONLY ALLOWED IN PRACTICE, NOT GAMES

## HOW TO PROTECT THE YOUNG SOCCER ATHLETE

- FOLLOW RECOMMENDED GUIDELINES FOR CONCUSSION PREVENTION
- FIFA TRAINING PROGRAM CAN REDUCE INJURIES BY 30-50%
- INCLUDES STRENGTHENING, NEUROMUSCULAR TRAINING, PLYOMETRIC TRAINING
- CAN ALSO IMPROVE NEUROMUSCULAR CONTROL, AGILITY, AND SPEED

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## LATERAL JUMPS

- 2 SETS OF 30 SECONDS
- **STARTING POSITION:** STAND ON ONE LEG. BEND HIPS, KNEE AND ANKLE SLIGHTLY AND LEAN UPPER BODY FORWARD.
- **ACTION:** JUMP FROM SUPPORTING LEG ABOUT 1M TO THE SIDE ONTO THE OTHER LEG. LAND GENTLY ON THE BALL OF YOUR FOOT AND BEND YOUR HIPS, KNEE, AND ANKLE. HOLD POSITION FOR ABOUT 1 SECOND AND THEN JUMP ON THE OTHER LEG. DO NOT LET KNEE BUCKLE INWARDS. FACE FORWARD.

## HIP EXTERNAL ROTATION

- **SET UP:** 6 CONES SET UP AT 5-6M INCREMENTS
- **ACTION:** PLAYER JOGS TO FIRST CONE, STOP AND LIFT KNEE FORWARD. ROTATE KNEE OUT TO SIDE AND THEN PUT FOOT DOWN. JOG TO NEXT CONE AND REPEAT ON OPPOSITE LEG.



## BALANCE BALL THROWING W/ PARTNER

- 2 SETS OF 30 SECONDS PER LEG
- **SET UP:** PARTNERS FACE ONE ANOTHER 2-3M APART, ONE PARTNER IS HOLDING A BALL.
- **ACTION:** BOTH PARTNERS LIFT ONE LEG AND MAINTAIN BALANCE WHILE THROWING THE BALL TO ONE ANOTHER. KEEP CORE ENGAGED. DO NOT ALLOW KNEE TO BUCKLE INWARD AND AVOID PELVIC TILTING TO ONE SIDE.

## WALKING LUNGES

- **SET UP:** 2 SETS OF 10 LUNGES PER LEG
- **ACTION:** LUNGE FORWARD SLOWLY AT AN EVEN PACE. BEND HIPS AND KNEES SLOWLY UNTIL YOUR LEADING KNEE IS FLEXED TO 90°. THE BENT KNEE SHOULD NOT EXTEND BEYOND THE TOES. DO NOT ALLOW KNEE TO FALL INWARDS.

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