

Preventing Golf Injuries

The three keys to keeping you on the course

by Dr. Robin Armstrong



Your warm up should start with some dynamic movements to increase your body temperature first, then stretching, then some practice swings. Some experts even suggest hitting balls at the driving range first before heading to the course.

3. Consult the experts. In professional golfers, low back pain develops due to repetitive strain - long hours on the course cause problems. But in most amateurs, low back pain results due to the wide variation in their golf swing. Inconsistency leads to back pain as a result of poor swing mechanics. It is worth it to spend some time with a golf pro to analyze your swing and give you tips to stay more consistent.

You also want to take care of any imbalances you have in your body that could lead to problems with your swing. Have a chiropractor assess your posture to determine if you are at risk for developing low back pain.

What if an injury does happen?

Don't play through back pain - it will only get worse. Put ice on the injury as soon as possible to decrease inflammation and consult a health professional like a chiropractor to get a diagnosis and appropriate treatment.

Golf is a wonderful way to stay active, get outside and be social. If we use the tools above to prevent injury we will be able to stay on the course for years to come.

THE LURE OF THE GOLF COURSE IS STRONG. On a sunny day, who can resist the call of freshly mowed greens? By the year 2020, the World Golf Foundation expects there to be 55 million participants in the game of golf. Unfortunately, low back pain is one of the most common golf related symptoms, comprising up to 50% of all injuries. So how can you prevent yourself from becoming another statistic?

We can prevent golf related low back pain in three key ways:

1. Prepare your body. Golf is a physically demanding sport that requires strength and flexibility to excel. To specifically avoid low back injuries it is important to have a strong core, which means developing the abdominal muscles as well as the supporting muscles of the low back. To get the most from your swing, your preparation should include stretches which rotate the spine, such as lying twists. Finally, the muscles around the hips must be flexible to fully rotate through the hip joint, and allow complete extension of the thigh.

2. Warm up. You've probably heard this before, but it cannot be emphasized enough. A scientific study found that injuries were reduced by about 60% in golfers who stretched and warmed up for at least 10 minutes before playing. Unfortunately, another study of over 1,000 amateur golfers found that only about half performed some sort of warm up.



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