**Injury Prevention**

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According to the American Academy of Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS), more than 501,000 basketball-related injuries were treated in hospital emergency rooms in 2009. The fast-paced action of basketball can lead to an injury that may potentially limit or end an entire season for the athlete. To prevent an injury, one can prepare for the sport through mature thinking, diet, and conditioning.

1. **Prevent "overuse" injuries** - many athletes play multiple sports through a given school year and summer. The AAOS has partnered with STOP injuries to help educate parents, coaches, and athletes to prevent injuries.
   1. Limit the number of teams your child is playing for one season - Athletes who are participating amongst many teams do not get the adequate rest necessary for muscle re-generating and building thus increasing the chance for sustaining an "overuse injury."
   2. Take a break from sports - Participating in sports year-round is fun and exciting for all athletes, but it also increases the chance for overuse injuries secondary to muscle fatigue and stress to the individual.
   3. Diet - Proper nutrition and hydration is mandatory for health tissue. Avoiding high content fatty foods, caffeine, and moderation of supplementation can promote healthy tissue and overall well-being. Hydration with the most common resource "water" is key to prevent diminished athlete performance. Therefore, substitute that "pop" or "special coffee" to maintain you hydration and performance.
   4. Warm up and stretch - Cold muscle does not allow the fibers to stretch and contract during an activity. Therefore, warm up and stretch prior to activity.
   5. Maintain fitness - Prior to a seasoned sport, prepare by being in good physical condition. This is to include but not limited to aerobic conditioning, guided strength training and flexibility.

Source: American Academy Orthopedic Surgeons (AAOS). Sports injury Prevention. (2011). http://orthoinfo.aaos.org