Summer is in full swing and it’s a great time to heed the advice to get active for all the health benefits exercise has to offer. But for some—particularly those who overdo or don’t warm-up or train properly—these benefits can come at a price: sports injuries.

The good news is that most sports injuries can be treated effectively and most people can return to a satisfying level of physical activity after an injury. Even better, research has shown that injury rates may be lowered by as much as 25% if a few precautions are taken.

First - it may be a good idea to get a pre-sports physical which can help evaluate and determine how much your body can handle depending on the rigors of your sport of choice. If you already lead an active life and want to ensure you are able to continue with your activities, it can help you know how much more you can participate to attain your full potential.

Next – check to see if you have the proper equipment for your level of expertise in the particular sport and also the proper clothing, especially supportive footwear. As shock absorbers, feet are subjected to nearly one million pounds of pressure during one hour of strenuous exercise. Proper footwear is important to cushion these loads. Different sports have different requirements so it is beneficial to wear sports-specific shoes.

Remember - fatigue has been shown to be a significant risk factor in athletic injuries. Studies have shown that ski injuries peak in mid-to-late afternoon when skiers are more tired. It is important to not try to push through pain or continue exercising or playing when tired or exhausted. Pain usually indicates a problem or potential underlying injury. It is really important to pay attention to the warning signs that your body provides.

### Common Sports Injuries

**Sprains and Strains**
A sprain is a stretch or tear of a ligament, the band of connective tissues that joins the end of one bone with another. A strain is a twist, pull, or tear of a muscle or tendon, a cord of tissue connecting muscle to bone.

**Knee Injuries**
The knee is the most commonly injured joint, because of its complex structure and weight-bearing capacity. Every year more than 5.5 million people visit doctors for knee problems.
Shin Splints
This refers to pain along the tibia or shin bone, the large bone in the front of the lower leg and primarily seen in runners, particularly those just starting a running program.

Achilles Tendon Injuries
This injury results from a stretch, tear, or irritation to the tendon connecting the calf muscle to the back of the heel and is common in middle-aged "weekend warriors" who may not exercise regularly or take time to stretch properly before an activity.

Fractures
A fracture is a break in the bone that can occur from either a quick, one-time injury to the bone (acute fracture) or more commonly from repeated stress to the bone over time (stress fracture).

Dislocations
This is when the two bones that come together to form a joint become separated as a result of excessive stretching or falling. A dislocated joint is an emergency situation that requires medical treatment.

RICE (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation)
To relieve pain, reduce swelling and speed healing, follow these four steps right after an injury for at least 48 hours:

• Rest. Reduce your regular activities. If you've injured your foot, ankle, or knee, take weight off of it with the help of crutches.
• Ice. Put a cold pack or ice bag on the injured area for 20 minutes, four to eight times a day. You can also use a plastic bag filled with crushed ice and wrapped in a towel.
• Compression. Put even pressure (compression) on the injured area to help reduce swelling. You can use an elastic wrap, special boot, air cast, or splint. Ask your doctor which one is best for your injury.
• Elevation. Put the injured area on a pillow, at a level above your heart, to help reduce swelling.

Although the RICE technique can be helpful, it is often just a starting point. At Health Dimensions Compounding Pharmacy, we are committed to working with your doctor to help you get the right treatment for your injuries.

Compounded Prescription Options
For many acute injuries, topical NSAIDs are used because they reduce inflammation without gastrointestinal side effects. Consult your physician about suggested prescription compounds:

- Bupivacaine 1% Diclofenac 5% Topiramate 5% cream
- Apply 1-2gm to affected area 3-4 times daily
- Available in 90gm, 120gm and 240gm

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