**INJURY PREVENTION**

**The stats…..**

* In Australia, netball represents 7% of adult and 4% of child sports related injuries presenting to hospital emergency departments.
* The rate of injury for netballers is 14 injuries per 1,000 hours played.
* Most common injuries are to the ankles, knees and hands due to falls, incorrect landing, over-exertion, overuse, collisions with other players and being struck by the ball.

Data from hospital in the period of 2000-2004 recorded:

* Fractures to the arm as the most common injury (29.5%)
* Anterior cruciate ligament rupture (16.5%)
* Achilles tendon injury (15.9%)

In another study focus on the incidence of injury on court

* Ankle injuries (84%) were the most common

**How can we prevent it?**

Muscle imbalance (where one muscle may be weak and tight and another is long and strong) can predispose individuals to injury.

An assessment of your muscle strength and flexibility can be conducted at Roberts physiotherapy where you will be given exercises that can significantly improve your performance and lower your risk for injury.

Pilates is one approach we often incorporate as it is a very effective way of improving core stability which is critical in netball because of the sudden explosive movements in many directions.

**Other ways to prevent injury…**

**WARM UP** before a game and training (allow minimum of 20 minutes).

Warm-ups reduce the risk for injury and improve performance.

* Light jogging 5 minutes
* Dynamic stretches 5-10 minutes, mentally focusing on game ahead
* Side step up and down the court at slow running pace 1-2 minutes
* Basic ball skills progressing to advanced skills – 5 minutes
* Progress to ball skills incorporating elements of game
* Quick, stop, start change in direction attempting to incorporate main elements of game

**WARM DOWN** helps to reduce muscle soreness by dispersing waste products (allow 10 minutes).

* Lightly jog up and down the court (2-5 minutes)
* Do firm sustained stretching particularly of the main leg muscles
* Muscles have been shown to lengthen more readily when warm and tired
* Whilst stretching, focus on positive elements of the game and resolutions to improve performance and satisfaction in next game

##### LANDING

Most ankle and knee injuries occur when landing. Train to land strongly by:

* Landing on the front of the foot, with the arch up
* Bending and keeping the knee out
* Keeping the pelvis level and body upright (chest up)
* Doing your training exercises

Warm-ups and warm-downs with the inclusion of stretches are important to prevent injuries and improve your game. Please feel free to contact me on

(08) 8263 8844 if you have queries about chronic niggly problems. If I am consulting, leave a message and I am more than happy to call you back.

Lisa Crowder

Tango League Physiotherapist

Roberts Physiotherapy