

Hip Pointer's

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Bumps and falls are all a part of everyday life as an athlete, and can often result in bruising and injury. The majority of these types of injuries are seen in contact sports. The term "hip pointer" is often used as a catch all phrase for any injury resulting in pain to the front of the hip. However, this is not always the case.

What is a Hip Pointer?

A hip pointer is bruising caused by a fall or a direct blow to the iliac crest, or front and top of the pelvis. This bruising is not always visible and may actually occur deep below the skin. Bruising may also occur in the abdominal muscles which attach to the pelvis. Most often hip pointers are seen in contact sports such as football and soccer. Hip pointers are extremely painful and may be aggravated by walking, running, laughing, coughing, or deep breathing.

TREATMENT

Hip pointers are treated immediately with rest and ice. Resting the injured hip from extremely painful movements will help to reduce swelling and speed the healing process. It may take 1 to 2 weeks before the injured hip is pain free with movement. During this time the athlete should be allowed to stretch the hip in all directions to avoid stiffness. The rule here is to stretch in the pain free range. Any pain will only slow the healing process and delay their return to sport.

It is important to consult your physician if your pain last more than two weeks or worsens overtime. This may be a sign of a more severe injury. Ice should be applied directly to the hip for 30 minutes of every 1-2 hours for the first 72 hours. A regimen of gentle stretching for 20-30 seconds can help to loosen the muscles around the injured hip and reduce pain. For more information on strains please see the article "The Sprains and Strains of Sporting Injuries" located on the Nationwide Children's Hospital website.

PREVENTION

Hip pointers can be prevented by wearing appropriate protective equipment. For example, football and hockey wear protective hip pads to help prevent this injury. In other sports where padding is not worn, such as soccer, certain skills and techniques can be taught to avoid this injury. Padding can also be worn to prevent further injury to the hip.

*Consult your primary care physician for more serious injuries that do not respond to basic first aid. As an added resource, the staff at **Nationwide Children's Sports Medicine** is available to diagnose and treat sports-related injuries for youth or adolescent athletes. Services are now available in four locations, to make an appointment, call **614-355-6000**.*