

Sports Medicine: Five Insights From The Doctor

[Paresh Dave](#) | September 27, 2011
Editor-In-Chief

Charles Feng, a physician at the [ALL PRO Health Center](#), explained recently on [KXSC Radio](#) how the sports medicine field is evolving, what injuries are becoming prevalent among amateurs and how physicians involved with athletic franchises decide when a player has to take a seat on the bench.

1. Athletics are becoming a larger part of the average person's life.

"We're seeing a lot more emphasis on sports performance and taking care of somebody's health with the advent of how much sports is playing an impact in most people's everyday's lives," Feng said.

With that has come more patients with hip and shoulder injuries because those mobile joints take a large load of the force in everyday activity.

"People are finding that their bodies aren't holding up quite as well as they did 20 or 30 years ago," Feng. "We're seeing a lot more of those injuries from weekend warriors."

Younger athletes also are over-exerting, according to Feng.

"We see with a lot of amateur athletes don't have the best sense what they are capable of...and a lot of times they will override what their body is telling them and get into certain overuse injuries such as tendinitis," Feng said. "For the young crowd as well as the old crowd, the most important thing is to go into a progressive state of exercise to have built in strong and challenging exercise and built in rest periods and built in periodization (with off-seasons and cross-training)."

2. Some NFL players this past off-season found that it's harder to get in shape for the regular season without organized training during the off-season.



Creative Commons image of a Track & Field athlete competing in a jumping event.

That becomes dangerous when you take away a needed period of rest as well.

“That period of tapering down has been accelerated due to the lack of organized off-season conditioning workouts,” Feng said.

3. Deciding when a player sits comes down to letting the body talk.

“We have to listen to our bodies,” Feng said. “The body is telling us we can’t go on in terms of pain, or swelling or any type of restriction of movement. Those are red flags..which we need to get right first. Other than that, we look at objective findings such as range of motion, the strength of the athletes, their ability to be able balance and to be able to use their body in a very uncontrolled environment such as the playing field, and also mentally, we have to make sure the athlete is ready to go. If any one of those factors are not on par with a healthy individual, then those are signs that we need to take a little more time in rehabilitating the athlete before he or she plays.”

4. K-12 schools in California need a network to connect with sports medicine experts willing to donate their time to understaffed and underfunded schools.

“It’s up to the athletic teams as well as the doctors to find each other, and if we can set the network of doctors and teams that are looking for medical staff, that would be an ideal solution,” Feng said.

5. Specialized and alternative medicine are creeping into the sports medicine umbrella.

A lot more people are training in specialized fields such as psychology, dentistry and nutrition, Feng said.

“With sports playing a bigger role in the lives of individuals, the demand for some of those specialists is very important,” he said. “It’s really important to expand the umbrella of sports medicine and make it available to the community we serve.”

He challenged the notion that the extra costs athletes face in dealing with these specialized practitioners outweighs the benefit.

“There’s a cost to each medical professional, but we have to look at the repercussions if that individual did not receive that care,” Feng said. “There’s a lot more to athletics than just the physical nature of sports and hand-eye coordination...There’s a place for each medical professional in the world of sports. With a great demand on the athlete in so many different directions, it’s important to have some of those avenues available to them.”

Source: <http://www.neontommy.com/news/2011/09/sports-medicine-five-insights-doctor>