

Chiropractic Makes Sports Sense

By Dan Sullivan



“In today’s videogame culture there is an epidemic of obesity among children of all ages,” says Dr. Maureen Thomm, a chiropractor at Colorado Sports Chiro Center in Louisville, CO. This phenomenon is more prevalent among elementary school children than ever before.

“All kids should participate in activities that promote physical motion. Sports are an easy way to promote physical activity,” says Dr. Scott Bautch

Chiropractors say children that play sports should be evaluated by a chiropractor on a regular basis to ensure their overall health and well-being.

CEO of Allied Health Chiropractic Centers in Wausau, WI. However, when it comes to safety, not all sports are created equal. “There’s no question that certain sports are safer for young children.”

THE NAME OF THE GAME

“Certainly contact sports such as football and lacrosse present statistically

higher potential for serious injury. In my experience young children tend to be more prone to fracture injuries,” says Thomm, who also treats children for sprains and overuse injuries such as tendonitis.

“Children suffer different types of injuries than older kids do. Their bodies are growing at rapid rates and are not developed physically,” says

Bautch, who divides sports into high versus low impact and high endurance versus medium to low endurance groups. He recommends that young children be encouraged to participate in medium endurance, low impact sports to avoid injuries.

ONGOING CHECK-UPS

Chiropractors say children that play sports should be evaluated by a chiropractor on a regular basis to ensure

their overall health and well-being. **“Because of the demands that athletic participation places on a child’s musculoskeletal system, it is extremely important to have a chiropractor involved in a child’s healthcare team,” says Thomm. “Chiropractic adjustments help to keep a child’s spine and nervous system functioning optimally during a crucial time in development. Regular chiropractic check-ups**

and adjustments help to minimize the impact that injuries can have on a child’s body.”

“I think children should be evaluated from day one by a chiropractor,” says Bautch. “The health and physical well-being of children is at an all time low. Healthy lifestyle counseling for children and parents should start as early as possible.” He believes that chiropractors are uniquely positioned to provide more than just treatment for acute injuries. “Chiropractors have an opportunity to counsel young people in healthy choices living.”

WEIGHING IN ON OFF-SEASON ACTIVITIES

In addition to playing sports children should be encouraged to participate in off-season conditioning programs as well. This however, does not necessarily mean weight training. “Children should not be encouraged to weight train before they reach puberty,” says Bautch. Instead children should be encouraged to work on activities that encourage coordination, balance and endurance.

“Each sport places unique demands on a child and it is imperative that conditioning continue in the off-season to minimize the risk of developing overuse injuries such as tendonitis or damage to cartilage,” says Thomm.

Whether playing sports or not, Thomm strongly recommends ongoing chiropractic care for children so that they may develop to their fullest potential.