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Summer Time Sports

Summer time has arrived and with it the added need for us to take extra care of our necks, backs and spines to avoid pain and injury... If the arrival of sunshine has caused you to pack away your winter jumpers and, instead, pull out your racket, shin pads or helmet for a bout of summer activities, remember to take note of these simple steps to ensure you steer clear of any unwanted pain and discomfort. RUNNERS can avoid injury by regular stretching of the tendons and wearing good shoes with shock-absorbing features. RACKET-SPORTS PLAYERS should be wary of playing through the pain of Tennis Elbow. Tennis Elbow is in fact an overuse injury, caused by repetitive movements at the wrist forcing the thumb outwards and the palm upwards. Continuing to play will only exacerbate the problem. GOLFERS are particularly prone to lower back injuries. Graphite clubs and soft spiked shoes will help absorb the shock which can bring on back injury. Your chiropractor can suggest appropriate warm-ups and exercises, and help you work on an alternative swing. GARDENERS commonly suffer from aches and pains, but they can avoid lower back trouble by kneeling on one leg rather than bending from the hips, keeping the back hollow whilst digging, and varying tasks throughout the day to avoid repetition injury. DIY, like gardening, is often far-removed from everyday activities. When the sun is shining many will

want to get out in the garden and get on with the long list of DIY jobs that have piled up over the winter months. Enthusiasts often injure their back by inhabitual exertion, so when lifting, take the weight on bent legs, keeping the back straight.



Joint support for summer sport

The long evenings and warm temperatures encourage many of us to be more active over summer. It's a great time to take up a new activity, improve our fitness, or lose weight. One of our most popular summer sports is, of course, tennis. Tennis is a fantastic activity: it builds strength, improves cardiovascular fitness, can help to strengthen our bones, improves coordination, and gets us exercising outside in the sun (for our vitamin D!). Another thing that's great about tennis is that it has a social element too – giving us one-to-one time with friends and helping us meet other people, which is so often lacking in today's technology-driven world. However, tennis can be tough on our joints, especially for those who are not used to impact sports. Here are our top foods and supplement suggestions that can help keep you in action on the court. Get plenty of vitamin C. Vitamin C is not just important for immunity. It's also vital for our body to make collagen, which in turn is used to make cartilage – the flexible material that helps to cushion our joints. When cartilage wears away, as in osteoarthritis ('wear and tear' arthritis), joints can become very painful. So where should you get your vitamin C? Ideally not by drinking fruit juices, which

contain lots of quickly absorbed sugar (even if it's just natural fruit sugar) and can end up causing more problems for our health. It's best to get vitamin C from a range of whole vegetables and fruit. Some of the best sources are broccoli, Brussels sprouts, kale, red cabbage, pepper, kiwi fruits and blackcurrants. Aim for at least the recommended 5 servings of vegetables and fruit per day – although the ideal is more like 7 to 9! The antioxidants in vegetables and fruit also have anti-inflammatory activity, helping to keep pain in check. Vitamin C supplements can also be supportive for your joints if you struggle to get enough through food. Eat oily fish Oily fish such as mackerel, salmon, sardines and herring contain the all-important omega-3 fats known as EPA (eicosapentaenoic acid) and DHA (docosahexaenoic acid). As well as being vital for our eyes, brain and heart, these omega-3 fats have anti-inflammatory activity, and possibly direct pain-relieving activity too [1, 2, 3]. This means eating oily fish could be helpful to manage or reduce joint pain, and even prevent inflammation that causes sore joints after exercise. Don't like fish? A daily fish oil supplement can be a good alternative. Avoid pro-inflammatory fats Just as it can be helpful to increase your anti-inflammatory omega-3s, it's equally important to avoid pro-inflammatory fats – the ones that can worsen inflammation. Unfortunately, these are the fats that we've long been told are good for us: vegetable oils. In general anything labelled 'vegetable oil' is bad news, and other general cooking oils such as sunflower oil or rapeseed oil. Margarines and spreads made with vegetable oils can be even worse because they contain hydrogenated vegetable oils – oils that have been turned into a solid fat by bubbling hydrogen through them. A lot of processed foods also contain vegetable oils, from cakes to breads to ready meals: another reason to eat more 'real' foods and ditch processed foods – especially those that come with a long list of ingredients on the label! Eat magnesium-rich foods Magnesium is an important mineral for our muscles and bones. It's also been found that having good levels of magnesium in our body may help to lower inflammation [4]. So eating magnesium-rich foods can be another good step towards better joint health. These include green vegetables, seeds and nuts, beans and pulses, and whole grains including oats, rye and buckwheat. Turmeric and ginger These traditional spices are not only delicious in curries and Asian food; they also have anti-inflammatory activity. Turmeric in particular (or its active component curcumin) has been shown in many studies to help reduce inflammation, and specifically to help to manage joint pain in knee arthritis [5, 6, 7]. Ginger may also help to reduce joint pain and inflammation [8]. Turmeric and ginger can be used every day in cooking. You can also use either of them to make tea: chop or grate fresh ginger or turmeric root and pour on boiling water (although watch out with fresh turmeric, as it can stain everything!). Try making a 'turmeric latte' with turmeric powder – it's become the drink of the moment among those looking for a healthier alternative to coffee. You can also just buy turmeric or ginger tea bags. Or if you have a juicer at home, try making fresh ginger juice and drinking a shot every day – it really packs a punch! Another alternative is to pickle ginger – delicious! If you struggle to get a daily dose of turmeric or ginger in your food, or you want a more convenient option, try turmeric or curcumin supplements. Bone broth / collagen Bone broth is another traditional food that's become popular as a 'health food' again. This is because bones are actually very rich in nutrients, and so properly prepared bone broth (made by simmering animal or fish bones for up to 24 hours or longer) is a natural, easy-to-absorb source of these nutrients, including vital minerals such as calcium and magnesium. Bone broth also provides natural collagen, primarily in the form of gelatin. As mentioned above, collagen is a building block for the cartilage that helps to protect our joints. Taking collagen in supplement form may also be supportive for joint health. A study found that taking collagen over 6 months reduced joint pain in a group of athletes [9]. Glucosamine If you've ever looked into taking supplements for joint health, you've probably heard of glucosamine.

Glucosamine is a building-block for making cartilage and synovial fluid in the joints. Taking glucosamine supplements has been found in some studies to be helpful for knee pain, especially in those with a prior injury or with osteoarthritis in the knee [10, 11]. Some studies do not show benefits, however. It's worth noting too that glucosamine has been found to be effective with doses of at least 1,500mg a day, and that it may take three months or more to work fully. So ideally, this is one to start taking in the spring if you want it to help keep you active over the summer! Devil's claw herbal remedy Devil's claw is a traditional herb used for relief of joint pain, as well as muscle pain and backache. Like turmeric and ginger, devil's claw is thought to have an anti-inflammatory effect. It could be a good choice to help relieve pain more quickly, compared to the longer-term protective effect of collagen or glucosamine.

Arnica gel If you experience muscle or joint pain after activity, try a topical arnica gel for additional support. Arnica gels are traditionally used to help with joint pain as well as muscle pain, stiffness, strains and bruising. In one study on a group of people with arthritis in their hands, using an arnica gel was even found to be as effective as ibuprofen gel for reducing pain [12].

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The Foam Rolling Revolution

Foam rolling as a health and fitness practice has exploded alongside the growing fitness industry. It is a technique that has long been used by professional athletes, coaches, and therapists but is now recommended to people of all ages and fitness levels. Foam rolling is a form of self-myofascial release, which means self-massage, used to release muscle tightness or trigger points. Trigger points are 'knots' in muscles that cause and refer pain when pressure is applied to them. When rolling or working on tight/sore muscles you will experience discomfort or pain. Think of it like the pain you get while stretching. It should be uncomfortable, but not unbearable, and when you are done it should feel better. Myofascial release is often performed by chiropractors, but self-care is important too and foam rolling can complement chiropractic therapies. Your chiropractor can recommend the best foam rolling techniques to suit your needs. There are a number of benefits to foam rolling: It can be a great warm up before exercise, as it helps to increase the blood flow to your muscles, improving the delivery of oxygen during exercise. For this reason, foam rolling after exercise can also improve recovery. It is possible to focus on specific problem areas to relieve discomfort from tight muscles. It can help to increase your range of motion and flexibility by stretching and lengthening your muscles. The process can also stimulate the lymph system, helping your body to eliminate toxins. Overall, foam rolling can help to increase physical ability, reduce stiffness, prevent injury and help you to feel your best. Book in with your chiropractor to get advice on how foam rolling can help you.

We treat all conditions that affect any muscle or joint in your body, from your head to your little toe! One of the most common complaints that we treat is back pain and Chiropractic is recommended by the government authority, the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE) for acute and chronic back pain. Some of the other conditions that we treat are: neck and head ache, shoulder pain, leg and hip pain, knee and foot pain, sciatica and arthritis. Our registered Chiropractors all have at least five years training. Treatment costs can be covered through most health insurers. If you are in any doubt, we are always very happy to talk with you on the phone to see if your condition will respond well to Chiropractic treatment or offer you a free advice session to discuss your condition in person. Call the clinic now to arrange an appointment time that works for you. 0115 9225085

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