



The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

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About AOSSM and *In Motion*

As a world leader in sports medicine education, the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM), we have designed the publication to highlight relevant information for multiple age groups from exercise and rehabilitation to nutrition and psychology.

This important educational tool is published quarterly and distributed electronically.

AOSSM members can add their practice name and logo to *In Motion*. Personalizing *In Motion* is an easy way to get pertinent, patient-friendly sports medicine information to your patients with just a click of a mouse. For more information, please e-mail Lisa Weisenberger at lisa@aossm.org or contact the Society at 847/292-4900.

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Injecting More Fun Into Sports — Lessen the Pressure

By John D. Kelly IV, MD

Times are tough and, the price of a college education is continually rising. With the mounting financial burden of a college education, many parents are hoping their child can attain an athletic scholarship. While this is certainly understandable, sports participation may easily degrade from an enjoyable pastime into a “do or die” proposition. With the added pressure to perform, many youth have lost any sense of fun; sports have become a job with the task at hand to attract the attention of college recruiters.

Sadly, many youth athletes are simply acting out the scripts their parents and/or coaches have prepared for them. Several negative consequences can result, including:

- **Overuse injuries** — In an effort to excel, the athlete over trains and becomes injured. Personal training, sports performance sessions and extra lifting/conditioning sessions are common place. One singular sport becomes the focus. There is no “down time” and the same bones and joints are stressed continually with tissue breakdowns and then injuries occurring.
- **Poor Performance** — Athletes who undergo extreme pressure to perform seldom realize their full potential and fall short of the “zone.” Excessive

anxiety impairs performance. In addition, an athlete performing to please a parent may feign injury or simply “choke” during the big game. True, lasting commitment to a goal will never occur when motivation is external. True winners are self motivated and have formulated goals for themselves.

- **Unhappiness** — Athletes who undergo the rigors of competition to please others are seldom happy. Anxiety and depression are common. The suboptimal performance that a poor mood promotes merely generates more stress and anxiety.

The Solution: FUN

Happy athletes perform better. When a youngster is having fun and is playing for themselves, everyone wins: the team is benefitting from enhanced performance, the athlete sows many fond memories and the parent will derive great satisfaction knowing that their child is truly enjoying themselves!

Inject some fun into your child’s athletic endeavors. Affirm your love by continually reminding them that sports are to be enjoyed. Both your child and team will benefit.

For more information on preventing overuse and traumatic injuries in kids, visit www.STOPSportsInjuries.org.

