Since the 1800s when bicycles first made their appearance, cycling has become popular for commuting, recreation, exercise, and sport. Today, there are about 80 million cyclists in the United States. Studies estimate that large numbers of these cyclists experience physical problems: 48 percent in their necks, 42 percent in their knees, 36 percent in the groin and buttocks, 31 percent in their hands, and 30 percent in the back. No matter why they use a bicycle, young people can follow some basic safety principles to avoid common cycling injuries.

**Knee Pain**

The knee is the most common site for overuse injuries in cycling. Patellofemoral syndrome (cyclist’s knee), patella and quadriceps tendinitis, medial plica syndrome, and iliotibial band friction syndrome are a few of the more common knee overuse injuries. The first four injuries mentioned involve pain around the kneecap, while the last condition results in outer knee pain. Shoe implants, wedges beneath the shoes, and cleat positions may help prevent some overuse injuries.
Foot Numbness and Tingling
Foot numbness and tingling are common complaints, and shoes that are too tight or narrow are often the cause. In addition, foot numbness can be due to exertional compartment syndrome. This arises from increased pressure in the lower leg and resulting compression of nerves. The diagnosis is made by pressure measurements and is treated with surgical release.

WHEN SHOULD I SEEK CARE FROM A PHYSICIAN?

Any injury that is accompanied by bleeding, severe pain, loss of sensation, or increased weakness should be seen by a physician. Other pain due to overuse or mild injuries can be treated by rest and taking pain relievers such as ibuprofen or acetaminophen. Swelling and pain can also be treated with alternating ice and heat therapy.

EXPERT CONSULTANTS

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Sports Tips provide general information only and are not a substitute for your own good judgement or consultation with a physician. To order multiple copies of this fact sheet or learn more about sports injury prevention, please visit www.STOPSportsInjuries.org.