



**Bayside Medical Group, Inc.**

www.baysidemed.com

**SPORTS**

## **Making Sports Healthy and Safe**

### **Attitude**

Kids who participate in sports are, on average, healthier mentally and physically than those who don't. "Couch potato-ism" still permeates our way of life. Anything that gets children moving helps. Competition is fine but over-competition can be a problem. Team experience builds healthy minds.

### **Injury Prevention**

Inexperience in prevention is one of our biggest problems. We need to pay more attention to bringing athletes along slowly in the early season and to encourage conditioning and strengthening exercises. Kids benefit from strenuous exercise as much as adults and tolerate it as well, with one exception—heat exhaustion. Kids need more water while exercising than adults.

Old equipment is to be avoided including old sneakers. Simple things can help. Keep equipment and litter away from the field where they are a tripping hazard. Fully two-thirds of injuries can theoretically be prevented! The aches and pains that occur should be respected. "No pain, no gain" is *not* supported by current theories. The injury most likely to happen is a re-injury.

### **Role of the Parent**

One obvious thing you can do is to help your child select his or her sports. Everyone cannot do everything. If your child is small and agile, gymnastics might be better than basketball. As always, focusing on what a child does well is most helpful for self-esteem.

### **Rehabilitation**

Great advances have been made in the area of rehabilitation. Rehab prevents re-injury and is extremely important. Resting and waiting for injuries to subside and then starting up again is *not* enough.

