PEDIATRIC OVERUSE INJURIES REFERRAL GUIDELINE

Maine Medical Partners - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine (Div. Of Pediatric Sports Medicine) · 119 Gannett Dr, South Portland, ME · (207) 773-0040

HIGH RISK

SUGGESTED EMERGENT CONSULTATION

SYMPTOMS AND LABS

Swollen, erythematous joint(s) with fever

Severe progressively worsening pain

MODERATE RISK

SUGGESTED CONSULTATION OR CO-MANAGEMENT

SYMPTOMS AND LABS

Limping

Swelling in joint(s) without erythema or fever

Pain limiting function/sports participation in high-level athlete

Locking symptoms

Pain out of proportion for overuse

Not improving with initial steps taken

LOW RISK

SUGGESTED ROUTINE CARE

SYMPTOMS AND LABS

Chronic pain

Mild symptoms (able to push through pain to participate in sports/gym)

NO swelling or locking symptoms

NO clear injury/onset of pain

SUGGESTED PREVISIT WORKUP

Send to ER or sports medicine that day for further evaluation

If unsure, consider contacting pediatric sports medicine specialist: MMP - Orthopedics & Sports Medicine (207) 773-0040

SUGGESTED WORKUP

Consider x-rays

Consider crutches or bracing

Hold from sports if limping, swelling in joints, or having severe pain

Refer to pediatric sports medicine (207) 773-0040

If no pediatric sports medicine specialist nearby, refer to a non-operative sports

SUGGESTED MANAGEMENT

Consider referral to physical therapy or provide focused stretching home program depending on your exam/diagnosis

Clear for sports/gym participation if no limping, no significant pain after or during activity

CLINICAL PEARLS

- Exam and history are usually sufficient to diagnose overuse injuries, x-rays help rule out fractures or other pathology.
- Growth plates are the weakest link in growing skeleton, NOT tendons or ligaments.
- Secondary growth plates serve as a pop-off valve and exist in different areas of the body at different ages.
- Joint effusion is ALWAYS abnormal in pediatrics.

General Treatment Strategies:

- Activity Modification:
 - Can range from immobilization to relative avoidance of certain maneuvers that provoke pain
 - No activity if limping or modifying gait due to pain
 - Ice, NSAIDs
- Gain appropriate flexibility
 - Stretching is the #1 way to resolve pain from apophysitis (tugging on secondary growth plates)
- Improve strength deficits

Prevention:

- Adequate physical training and variation in sport-specific movements (AKA – cross training/playing more than one sport)
 - Adequate flexibility and strength to reduce strain
 - At least 2-3 months off from any given sport per year
- Active rest after cycles of training (AKA BREAKS from sport/days off)
- Pitch counts, reducing curve/slider type pitching
 - Avoid playing fatigued
 - Bottom line <u>Improve biomechanics</u>

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