

# HEALTH BEAT

CSULB Division of Student Services, Student Health Services, Health Resource Center - Room 268

## A Common, But Painful Injury

By Jocelyn Lopez

Volume 8, Issue 3



Students of all ages participate in sports because of the healthful benefits they receive, such as: reducing the risk of heart disease and diabetes, positive physical activity and proper weight loss/maintenance. In spite of the positives, participation in sports can cause injuries. Sport's injuries refer to the types of trauma that frequently occur during athletic training and exercise. Some sports injuries are caused accidentally; while others are due to poor training practices, lack of conditioning, insufficient warm up and stretching.<sup>1</sup>

One of the most common injuries in sports is an inversion ankle sprain. Athletes participating in basketball, football, and volleyball are prone to suffer this specific sprain. Often it is referred to as a "twisted ankle."<sup>2</sup> It occurs when the foot is turned inward forcefully (twisted) beyond ligament and muscular control and normality. This causes

a strain or tear of a ligament, which is the band of connective tissues that joins the end of one bone to another.

Classification of inversion ankle sprains is done through a grading system (1 - 4) according to the amount of damage.<sup>2</sup> Fortunately, most ankle sprains are acute injuries and most people return to a satisfying level of physical activity after a couple of weeks, due to replacement of stronger fibrous tissue in the injured area.

If the ankle injury does not appear to be serious, stop what you are doing and follow the **R.I.C.E.** self treatment:

**Rest** the injured area as much as possible for 24-48 hours.

**Ice** the injured area as soon as possible for at least 3 cycles of 20 minutes on and 20 minutes off.

**Compression.** Apply an elastic bandage to the area to control movement, but make sure to loosen it if you feel numbness, tingling or increased pain.

**Elevation.** Raise the injured area above heart level when at rest or while sleeping.<sup>3</sup>

Clinician may prescribe medication for pain or suggest specific over the counter analgesics. Full return to activity should not be done until full range of motion no longer causes pain.

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### Special points of interest:

- "Can I Kiss You" - Join speaker, Mike Dormitz, February 5th, 7:30 - 9 PM, in the USU Grand Ballroom as he discusses social boundaries between women and men.
- Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting are offered to students every Wednesday 12 - 1PM, in Student Health Services, Room 268. Free and confidential. For more information call ATOD: (562)985-2520.
- February 14th is National Condom Day.
- Nutrition Counseling starts on March 5th.
- Look out for a Saint Patrick's Day event brought to you by ATOD March 15th.

## Body Artistry

By Alex Ramos

Students express themselves artistically in a variety of ways, such as body tattoos and piercings. It is critical for those who are thinking of either a piercing or a tattoo, to consider all safety precautions before rolling up those sleeves and exposing a body part to the needle. Often students are more concerned with: Does it hurt? Some reflect that being tattooed feels as if you are

being inoculated simultaneously with many shots or being stung by a hornet multiple times.<sup>1</sup> Bottom line, no matter what the pain level, be sure you are getting it done safely.

Before your first tattoo or piercing, make sure that you are up-to-date with all immunizations, especially hepatitis and tetanus.<sup>1</sup> Know the location of your nearest medical care center in case

of infection. Signs of infection include: excessive redness or tenderness, prolonged bleeding, pus, or changes in your skin color around the tattoo. If you have any medical conditions such as: heart disease, allergies, diabetes, skin disorders, immune system disorders, bacterial or viral infections, or are pregnant, be sure to check with a doctor

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# Being Safe For All Seasons

By Arianne Stamps

For students, every season offers activities that keep you busy. Whether it is the Christmas season or summer parties, there are meals to be made, shopping to be done, decorations to put up and parties to attend. It's no surprise with all this rushing about that specific types of injuries occur more frequently. For instance, ER visits rise 12% due to falls at specific holiday periods.<sup>1</sup> No matter what the season, most of these injuries happen in the home and are preventable.

Often, it is the common, at home activities that cause the highest number of injuries because of carelessness and lack of attention. For instance, falls that transpire during the winter holiday period lead to the most serious injuries.<sup>1</sup> Broken bones seem to account for the leading common holiday injury, totaling up to approximately 38%.<sup>1</sup> The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that two to three people are treated every hour during the holidays for fall-related injuries.<sup>2</sup> This equates to about 5,800 people spending time in an ER rather than with loved ones because of falls from ladders, slips off furniture or tripping over unfamiliar items (like gifts and decorations).<sup>1</sup> Many people misuse

equipment or furniture, standing on items that collapse under their weight. People also misuse ladders, by overstretching themselves when reaching to hang or collect objects, causing themselves to lose their balance and fall.

Other seemingly innocent holiday activities are food preparation. With cooking, it's not uncommon for people to cut their hands due to improper cutting techniques and

dull knives. Make sure that your knives are properly sharpened. When using a sharp knife to cut food, be sure that your fingers are positioned away from the blade so they do not get cut. And never try to cut food while holding it in the palm of your hand.

In addition to cuts, people also incur burn injuries. When you are cooking and doing other things at the same time, you may become distracted and forget to practice safety. For instance, you can easily burn yourself while reaching in the oven or handling hot pots and foods. If you are cooking, make sure that your focus remains on the immediate task.

Unattended barbecues and stoves, can easily lead to fires. Always keep towels or potholders readily accessible - never pick up heated items with your bare hands no matter how cool you think it may be. Be cautious of leaving any fabrics, paper or any flammable items near open flames such as gas stoves, ovens, barbecues or decorative candles.

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# Kiss It and Make It All Better

By Linda Peña

Many students wish to break from the protective arms of their parents. However, there are some aspects of parental concern that can be missed, no matter what the age. Remember falling and scraping a knee or an elbow, and how mom or dad would soothe the injury with kind words, stinging antiseptic, a bandage and a kiss to make it better? Although students may not have access to that type of attention now, their injuries still need care.

In order to take care of yourself, take these immediate steps to reduce the chances of infection of open wounds.

- Wash hands before treating the wound.
- If available, put on disposable gloves.
- Avoid breathing or coughing over the wound.
- Clean the wound with cool water.
- Use soap and a soft washcloth to clean the skin around the injury.

- Cover the wound with a sterile dressing.
- Don't handle the dressing unnecessarily.
- Try not to touch the dressing's surface before applying it to the wound.
- Change the bandage each day to keep the wound clean and dry.<sup>1,2</sup>



Students need to have a first-aid kit readily handy. Pre-packaged kits can be purchased, but on a student's budget this is not often

feasible. Therefore, students can combine their monies and buy the items together. Each purchaser would provide their own container, and from the purchased items, chooses items for their kit. The following list is

appropriate items to be included in a basic first aid kit:

- Bandages of various sizes
- 2 Sterile eye pads
- 2 Sterile coverings for serious wounds
- Triangular bandage
- 6 Safety pins
- Un-medicated wound dressings
- 1 Roll adhesive tape, 1.25cm. wide
- 1 Pair of scissors
- 1 Pair of disposable gloves
- 1 Pair of tweezers
- Small bottle of sterile eyewash solution
- Alcohol swabs
- Hand towels
- First aid booklet.<sup>3</sup>

Storage is critical. Keep the first aid box in a dry, cool location. Make sure the kit is easily accessible, and everyone knows

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## Injuries Continued ...

Therefore, it is critical to remember for general prevention of sport related injuries to not make sudden changes in your exercise routine and slowly build up to harder and more complex activity. Always warm-up and stretch your muscles before working out. Stretching after a workout is also important. Avoid running on hard surfaces, such as

concrete and do not lock your knees, especially when stretching or landing a jump. By following these simple guidelines, you will prevent injuries and reap the benefits of your athletic endeavors.

1. National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases (NIAMS). *Handout on Health: Sports Injuries*. Retrieved 11/14/2006: from

[http://www.niams.nih.gov/hi/topics/sports\\_injuries/SportsInjuries.htm](http://www.niams.nih.gov/hi/topics/sports_injuries/SportsInjuries.htm)

2. Bays, Jeff, MSPT. "Inversion Ankle Sprain." *Common Athletic Injuries*. Retrieved 11/14/2006: from <http://www.stockton.edu/ospreys/ATInversionAnkle.htm>
3. University Health Services. *Athletic Injuries*. Retrieved 11/14/2006: from [http://www.princeton.edu/uhs/hi\\_athletic\\_injuries.html](http://www.princeton.edu/uhs/hi_athletic_injuries.html)

## Body Artistry Continued ...



about specific concerns or precautions you should take beforehand.<sup>1</sup> The body responds to a tattoo or a piercing as a wound. Similar to other wounds such as a slice, scrape, puncture, cut, or penetration to your skin, tattoos and piercings can be susceptible to scarring.

Prior to being tattooed or pierced, be sure the studio is clean, safe, and that all equipment used is disposable and sterilized, such as gloves, needles and masks. Also, check for the following:

- The studio has an autoclave (a device that uses steam, pressure, and heat for sterilization). You should be allowed to watch as equipment is sterilized in the autoclave.<sup>2</sup>
- Check that the practitioner is licensed.
- Tattoo studios are required to follow the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's Universal Precautions. These are regulations that outline procedures to be followed when dealing with body fluids.<sup>1</sup>
- For piercing, check that all equipment is sealed in

individual sterilized packages.<sup>2</sup>

Require the practitioner to explain all procedures and provide you with written instructions for safe aftercare for tattoos and piercing. A warning: if the aftercare suggests cleaning with harsh soap, ointment, alcohol, or hydrogen peroxide, the studio is not keeping up with industry standards.<sup>2</sup> Another important "Don't," do not share body jewelry. According to a study by Dr. Hollberg, swapping jewelry raises the risk of becoming infected with Hepatitis C Virus.<sup>3</sup>

Only you can make the decision to be tattooed or pierced. However, to exhibit your body art as risk free as possible, be sure the studio follows all mandated regulations and you commit to follow through on all your aftercare procedures.

1. Kottenhahn, Renee (2006). *Tattoos*. Retrieved December 14, 2006, from: <http://www.kidshealth.org>
2. The Association of, Professional Piercers (APP) (2006). *Safe piercing*. Retrieved December 19, 2006, from: <http://www.safepiercing.org/choosePiercer.html>
3. Hollberg, Julie. (2006, October). *Are U.S. undergraduates in danger of acquiring hepatitis C? Assessment of student risk behavior and knowledge of the disease*. Paper presented at the American College of Gastroenterology annual meeting, Las Vegas, Nevada.

## Safe For All Seasons Continued ...

Also, keep a fire extinguisher and baking soda on hand. Both can be effectively used to quickly douse any small fires.

All seasons provide holidays that are a time of fun and laughter, hopefully not pain and accidents.

Taking a few common sense precautions will help to ensure that you'll experience safe and accident-free holiday seasons. Have a safe and happy 2007!

1. *Feds Warn Americans About Seasonal Decorating Injuries*. Available at: [http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2004-12-09-holiday-injuries\\_x.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/health/2004-12-09-holiday-injuries_x.htm).

Accessed October 9, 2006.

2. Hitti, Miranda. *Take Care to Avoid Falls While Decorating, Says CDC*. Available at: <http://www.webmd.com/content/article/98/104712.htm>. Accessed on October 9, 2006.

## Make It All Better Continued ...

where it is. Some items may have expiration dates. Check the items regularly and replace them when necessary. If an item is used from the kit, promptly replace it. By following these suggestions, you are providing the very best care. As far as the soothing kiss, you are

responsible for finding a donor who will apply that remedy.

1. American Academy of Family Physicians. *Cuts Scrapes and Stitches: Caring for Wounds*. Retrieved 12/13/2006: from <http://familydoctor.org/041.xml?>
2. Better Health Channel. *First aid - Q & A*. Retrieved 12/13/2006: from <http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/>

[pages/First\\_aid\\_questions\\_and\\_answers?Open](#)

3. Better Health Channel. *First aid kits*. Retrieved 12/13/2006: from [http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/First\\_aid\\_kits](http://www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au/bhcv2/bhcarticles.nsf/pages/First_aid_kits)

**The Alcohol, Tobacco, & Other Drugs (ATOD) Program would like to welcome the students of CSULB back to the spring 2007 semester. ATOD would also like to remind students not to forget campus policies:**

- **No drinking on campus. <sup>1</sup>**
- **No illegal drugs on campus.**
- **No smoking within 20 feet of all building entrances and exits.**

1 - Alcohol is served to adults, 21 and over, at the Nugget Pub and Grill only.

[www.csulb.edu/atod](http://www.csulb.edu/atod)



**Don't Forget!**  
*February 14th is  
National Condom Day*

**DID YOU KNOW THAT YOU CAN COME INTO THE HEALTH RESOURCE CENTER TO GET A FREE CONDOM?**

**IF YOU NEED VARIETY IN YOUR LIFE, THE PHARMACY IN STUDENT HEALTH SERVICES SELLS A VARIETY OF CONDOMS AT SUPER LOW PRICES THAT WILL MEET YOUR NEEDS.**

**The Health Resource Center Offers All Of These Great Services For FREE!**

**Sexual Health Awareness Workshop (SHAW)**  
 Tuesday: 10:00 AM - 12:00 PM  
 Thursday: 3:30 PM - 5:30 PM

**HIV Counseling & Testing**  
 Monday: 2:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
 Tuesday: 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
 Wednesday: 10:30 AM - 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM - 6:00 PM  
 Thursday: 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

**Nutrition Counseling (Beginning March 5th)**

**Health Information**  
 562.985-4609 • [www.csulb.edu/hrc](http://www.csulb.edu/hrc)



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