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Annual Sports Injury Peak About to Hit

Footy's back and no matter which code you subscribe to the Chiropractors' Association of Australia is forecasting a surge in sports-related injuries over coming weeks.

According to CAA spokesperson, sports chiropractor Dr Peter Garbutt, Aussie Rules tops the injury list with rugby, soccer and netball also taking a toll on players during the pre-season and early rounds.

"Hamstring injuries are most common at this time of the year, especially in the faster running sports such as soccer, rugby, AFL and hockey, as 'weekend warriors' return after the off-season break," Dr Garbutt explained.

"Back problems are also a major issue and can be intertwined with hamstring injuries, whereby one injury can trigger the other."

Footballers in particular, appear to be more susceptible to low back pain.

A study published last year by Dr Garbutt and colleagues found that footballers in Australia have significantly more severe and frequent low back pain compared with non-athletes and this escalates with the level of competition¹.

Low back pain is the most common injury reported² in elite soccer and back injuries have the highest rate of recurrence for all injuries in elite rugby players³. Shoulder injuries are also rife amongst rugby league players⁴.

In Aussie Rules the injury toll is high, even amongst the amateurs with 27 per cent reporting long term or recurrent back problems⁵.

To minimise the injury risk Dr Garbutt recommends a holistic approach to getting ready for the game.

This includes regular maintenance, good nutrition, appropriate warm up and warm down protocols including stretching after a game, being prepared with a proper training regime, easing back into exercise after a break and hydration on the field.

Dr Garbutt also recommends that anyone returning to sport after a break consider a visit to their local chiropractor to tune up their body and make sure it is ready to go for the season.

Chiropractors are five year university trained, government regulated and registered healthcare professionals who specialise in the diagnosis and management of spinal health related problems.

In Australia, the CAA has a special interest group for sports chiropractors called Sports Chiropractic Australia. These Chiropractors adopt techniques ranging from manipulation, mobilisation, soft tissue therapies, electrotherapy, rehabilitation, movement and exercise therapies, nutritional advice, strapping and bracing.

“Increasingly professional sporting teams are adding a sports chiropractor to their health care staff to help players maintain their structural health both before and after the game,” Dr Garbutt said.

“Research with two AFL teams has demonstrated the benefits of chiropractic support for injury prevention, reduction of low back pain and improvement in the health status of players⁶,” Dr Garbutt said.

“And in the US, all 32 teams in the National Football League now routinely provide their players with chiropractic services as part of the triage in managing and preventing on-field injuries.”

Dr Garbutt himself is team chiropractor to a number of teams ranging from beach volley ball and water polo to soccer.

“No matter what sport you play, you will be placing your body under structural stress,” he warned.

“There are benefits to be had in ensuring your body has a regular tune up and is ready to perform at its peak – in the same way that you would regularly book your car in for a service.”

To find out more about chiropractic care or to locate a local chiropractor visit: www.chiropractors.asn.au

REFERENCES:

All references cited in this release can be found at: www.chiropractors.asn.au/references

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITY:

Dr Peter Garbutt is available to discuss the issues associated with sporting related injuries including prevention and recovery.

For further information or to request an interview please contact: Felicity Sincock or Kelly Ward at The Reputation Group on 03 9820 2633.

About the Chiropractors' Association of Australia

The Chiropractors' Association of Australia (National) Limited (CAA) is the peak body representing chiropractors. An underlying principle of chiropractic is “healthy spine, healthier life”. By offering expert, drug-free spinal health care and lifestyle advice, chiropractors help Australians lead and maintain healthy lives. With over 2,900 members, the CAA is the largest chiropractic health body in Australia, and coordinates its efforts with its 8 autonomous CAA state and territory organisations.