

Hospital Happenings – August 2011
Bumps and Bruises and our High School Athletes

It's a sure sign that summer is drawing to a close when you see our high school athletes out on the fields and in the gym for "two-a-day" practices. It's impressive to see how much time, energy and effort the players and coaches give to their sports. In addition, there are many people on the sidelines who help support and encourage these athletes to succeed at their optimal level. Trainers, parents, physicians, physical therapists, dietitians and many more contribute to the success of our student athletes and they are all pieces of the puzzle that combine to make our teams stronger and more successful.

Montrose Memorial Hospital is very active in helping to keep the athletes safe, assisting them to get stronger, and helping them get back onto the field or into the gym if they get injured. A group of our physicians, led by Dr. Mike Benziger and Dr. Gayle Frazzetta, have been working closely with the school district to develop guidelines regarding head injuries. Concussions have become a major focus in the past few years because of their severity and lasting effects on athletes.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, concussions account for almost one in ten sports injuries, and for young people ages 15-24, sports are second only to motor vehicle accidents as the leading cause of brain injury. The most concussions occurred in football and boys' and girls' soccer. Young athletes, whose brains and skulls are immature, risk death or additional concussions by going back too soon. Recurrent concussions also have led to depression and early dementia, according to studies on retired NFL players. All concussions require evaluation by a medical doctor.

Thanks to this collaborative effort, all athletes at Montrose and Olathe High schools must take the ImPACT computer test before their season starts in 9th grade and again in 11th grade. ImPACT's concussion assessment and cognitive testing software helps guide athletes, parents, coaches and doctors through the concussion recovery process. If an athlete gets a concussion during a sporting event, the physicians, trainers, coaches and parents can evaluate the players' ability to answer certain questions, and successfully complete some activities before and after the injury. This is an additional tool that can help evaluate the brain's healing process and assist in getting the player back in the game when (and not before) he or she is ready.

In addition all of the coaches are required to participate in the Center for Disease Control (CDC) training which educates them on concussion symptoms and danger signs. The class also assists them in ways to care for the athlete and to help educate the injured student and their parents.

Another way MMH is supporting our athletes is with our Bumps and Bruises Clinic which is offered every Saturday morning during the school year. The FREE clinic is from 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., or by appointment during the week, and athletes who have been injured are invited to come to Mountain View Therapy for an assessment of the injury. Sprained ankles, strained muscles and more will be evaluated by the physical therapist and either treated or referred to a physician if needed. The athlete's information will be shared with the school's athletic office as well as the coach so everyone will be involved and informed of the athlete's injury and progress toward recovery. Don't hesitate to call 240-7369 and talk to Judy, Doug or Megan if you have questions.

Good luck to all of the athletes and coaches. We appreciate and admire your hard work and dedication and look forward to watching you and cheering you on during the school year!