
Preface

Head and neck injuries are among the most serious injuries in sports. They are responsible for greater incidences of disability and fatality in athletes than sports injuries of any other body parts. Increasingly, these injuries are a source of concern among parents who see the media scrutiny over head and neck injuries and ask the question, “Is my child at risk?” and “Should I let my child play sports?”

In particular, there is a lot of attention focused on the long-term implications of concussions sustained by athletes engaged in collision sports such as football, ice hockey, and rugby.

The good news is that serious head and neck injuries are rare in all sports, youth sports included, even in those sports with the potential for falls and collision. When a serious head or neck injury occurs, however, the consequences are profound and far-reaching. The implications may extend beyond the health of the child to the well-being of the child’s family, school, fellow athletes, and the community at large.

With all this in mind, we set about to create a book that contained the most up-to-date information about the head and neck injuries sustained by young athletes. We are fortunate to have attracted some of the preeminent names in the field.

Our authors were able to provide a thorough review of several complex and emerging issues for adolescent athletes. Some chapters expand on previous treatment guidelines, like encouraging some early cognitive activity in concussion management, while others attempt to summarize the current evidence of topics that are still incompletely understood, like chronic traumatic encephalopathy. We have striven to make this book complete with practical information that ranges from the sideline assessment of injuries, to the safe transport of athletes, to the theory of a stepwise approach to rehab and return to sports.

In addition to addressing the kinds of head and neck injuries one might ordinarily expect to see in a sports medicine book with an orthopedic orientation, we were also able to enlist the expertise of authors to write about important related issues such as visual dysfunction and protective equipment. We felt it was important to include practical information for the sports medicine physician on topics that are often treated by specialists in other fields such as dental and ear injuries. The inclusion of these chapters makes this book all the more comprehensive and useful.

It goes without saying that our stellar authors are busy people, and we thank them for taking time out of their busy schedules to share their expertise in the chapters they contributed.

With head and neck injuries increasingly in the spotlight, the time is right for a new book that covers the important subject matter. We are pleased to share with you this new addition to the literature. We are proud of the amount of time and effort that went into this book by so many people and trust that you will find such effort reflected in the finished product.

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