

# INJURY PREVENTION

## FOR YOUTH FOOTBALL PLAYER

### Warm-Up

#### Light Cardio:

- Jogging, skipping, backpedaling

#### Dynamic Drills:

- High knees, butt kicks, side shuffles
- Walking lunges with rotation
- Arm swings, hip circles, torso twists

#### Football-specific movement drills:

- Quick foot ladder work
- Sprint starts, backpedal-to-sprint transitions



### Strength and Stability

#### Core Strength (for stability in blocking & tackling):

- Planks, side planks
- Medicine ball slams and rotational throws
- Bird-dogs and dead bugs

#### Lower Body Strength (for speed & power):

- Squats and lunges
- Romanian deadlifts
- Step-ups and sled pushes
- Box jumps (focus on controlled landings)

#### Upper Body Strength (for tackling & blocking):

- Push-ups, bench press, dumbbell rows
- Pull-ups/chin-ups
- Resistance band external rotations for shoulders

#### Stability & Agility:

- Single-leg balance drills
- Agility ladder, cone cutting drills
- Deceleration and landing mechanics (practice planting and stopping safely)



### Stretching

- **Pre-practice:** Dynamic mobility only
- **Post-practice/game** (Gentle dynamic recovery stretching to reduce stiffness):

- Walking hamstring kicks
- Hip flexor/quad mobility drills
- Cat-cow spine flows
- Shoulder and arm swings



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### Avoiding Overuse and Acute Injuries

- Always wear properly fitted helmet and pads
- Emphasize safe tackling form (keep head up, don't lead with crown of helmet)
- Strengthen neck, shoulders, hips, and core to reduce impact risk
- Maintain flexibility to prevent muscle pulls
- Take rest days seriously — recovery prevents overuse injuries



### Rest & Recovery

- Schedule at least 1–2 rest days per week
- Prioritize quality sleep (8–10 hours for youth athletes)
- Use active recovery (light jogging, stretching, swimming, yoga) after tough games
- Ice sore joints/muscles as needed and communicate injuries early to coaches/athletic trainers



### Technique and Skill Progression

- Master fundamental blocking, tackling, and landing techniques before advancing
- Practice proper body mechanics when cutting, planting, or pivoting
- Use safe contact drills under coach supervision
- Avoid dangerous head-first tackling or twisting landings



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