

having the joint kept flexible through regular exercise. It will also heal much quicker because of the improved blood supply.

Complications

7 Many women with ankle injuries complain of osteoarthritis later in life. Although there is controversy over the link between osteoarthritis and sports injuries (such as hip problems in people who jog excessively on roads in poor footwear), common sense dictates that regular damage to a joint must impair its function eventually.

Self care

8 Many injuries do not require anything other than rest and time to sort them out. Physiotherapy may be required to restore normal function. Surgery is common for injuries such as torn knee cartilage or snapped tendons. Many of these treatments do not restore the

normal state of the muscle, joint or tendon and there may be reduced movement or power.

8 Immediate first aid can help reduce pain and limit the permanent damage to the joint.

9 R.I.C.E is a system used by many first aiders and sports physiotherapists.

- R – Rest. Further movement will only make the damage worse. Once the initial inflammation has subsided gentle exercises help restore normal function.
- I – Ice. Cool the joint with bags of ice packed in cloth. This eases the pain and reduces the inflammation. Do not apply ice (or bags of frozen peas) directly to the skin. Remove the pack after 5 minutes maximum. Reapply every hour in the first 48 hours.

- C – Compression. An elastic bandage will help reduce swelling. Make sure it is well above and below the affected joint. Take it off at night.

- E – Elevation. Raise the limb and support it. This helps reduce swelling by draining the fluid away from the joint.

10 So called 'sports gels' containing anti-inflammatory drugs are of limited value as their penetration through the skin can be minimal, especially over large joints. But they do provide a benefit from the massage and warmth produced.

24 Sunburn

1 Although there is some controversy over the danger of exposure to too much sunlight, we do know that it can be harmful. Over the past few decades there has been a dramatic increase in the number of cases of malignant melanoma, a particularly nasty and potentially lethal skin cancer. Once considered rare, it is still increasing possibly due to the desire for sun-drenched holidays. Australia has been in the forefront of educating people over the dangers of sunbathing. You will be lucky to avoid being drenched in sun block from 'wardens' carrying back-pack sprayers on the watch for unprotected sunbathers on Australia's beaches.

Symptoms

2 The first sign of a burn is a reddening of the skin caused by blood vessels increasing in size to get rid of as much heat as possible (like a 'flush') Most people therefore, do not realise that they have badly burned themselves until later on in the day. At this stage damage is already being done to the skin. If the exposure to the sun continues the skin will form blisters just as with a scald. These blisters burst very quickly and the covering skin is then lost, exposing red skin beneath. If this is extensive, a large amount of body fluids can be lost.

Causes

3 Skin colour – the degree of pigmentation – is important as ultra violet light (UV) can penetrate the outer layers of skin, especially in fair skinned people. It heats and damages the lower layers causing skin loss. The only way the body can prevent further damage in the future is by increasing the amount of melanin, a black pigment, in the skin which

prevents the sun from reaching the delicate lower skin layers. This is the 'suntan' we crave so much.

Prevention

4 There is now controversy over the effectiveness of sun block in preventing cancer but it probably makes sense to use a very strong sun block (factor 30 and over) effective against UVA and UVB. Better still, simply covering the body, especially the head, provides absolute protection. Even so some blouses and tops are so thin they are almost completely transparent to UV.

Complications

5 Like any burn, skin damaged by over-exposure to UV can scar. Long-term exposure to the sun causes the collagen network within the skin to become less flexible. This makes the skin lose its elasticity so it droops, folds and wrinkles very easily. Women are rapidly recognising the impact of sunburn on the aging process.

Self care

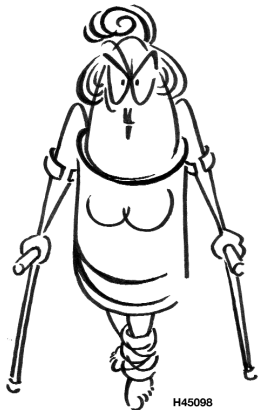
6 Treat sunburn like any other burn. There are lotions you can apply which will ease the pain but they cannot prevent the damage which is already done. Plenty of non-alcoholic fluids and staying out of the sun for a few days promotes skin repair and prevents further damage. Tepid baths ease the pain, warm baths make it worse and probably delay healing. Paracetamol will ease the pain and calamine lotion takes the sting out of the burn.

25 Sweat

1 With increased body temperatures there is an enhanced blood flow to the skin surface. When the temperature is low, blood vessels constrict to reduce blood flow and thus heat loss. Temperature is regulated by a special centre in the brain. Glands in the skin secrete moisture, which on evaporation cools the body surface. We tend to forget that the skin is really a waste disposal machine and gets rid of many toxins by this route. Dogs can taste the difference between 'clean' sweat and sweat contaminated by toxins such as



lipstick



Don't tell me a sports injury just proves exercise is bad for you! Help me get better and then chase me to the gym again - you know it makes sense!

alcohol. Meat eaters actually smell different from vegetarians.

2 Sweat is a mixture of water, salts and a little protein. It is produced by the skin's sweat glands which are found all over the body but tend to be more concentrated in areas like the hands. Although the skin is a major detoxifying organ the production of sweat is mainly part of temperature control. Dogs do not sweat and instead use air passing over their tongue which tend to be very large as a consequence. The evaporation of the water has a dramatic cooling effect especially if there is free movement of air

over the skin. Clothes, especially those with enclosed spaces act as 'double glazing' trapping air heated by the body. Sweat evaporation is also prevented which is why totally impervious material like plastic produces dampness. Very large amounts of body water can be lost in high temperatures or during a fever which must be replaced as the body cannot withstand dehydration for more than a day or so.

Symptoms

3 Profuse sweating can be embarrassing but rarely dangerous unless there is also significant