



GIRLS IN THE GAME

NOVA
PHYSIOTHERAPY

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A Physiotherapist's Guide to Staying Healthy in Soccer

Soccer is fun, fast, and exciting and taking care of your body is just as important as practicing your skills! Research from FIFA shows that performing a good warm-up at least twice per week can reduce injuries by up to 50%.

Why Warm up?

A warm-up prepares your body and brain for soccer by:

- Increasing blood flow to your muscles
- Improving balance, coordination, and reaction time
- Preparing your joints for running, jumping, and changing direction
- Reducing the risk of common injuries like ankle sprains, knee injuries, and muscle strains

A good warm-up should take 10-15 minutes. You should feel warm, be breathing a little faster, and maybe even have a light sweat.

Other Ways to Prevent Injuries

- ⚽ Stay hydrated before, during, and after soccer.
- ⚽ Eat healthy meals to fuel your muscles.
- ⚽ Sleep 9-12 hours each night
- ⚽ Tell a coach, parent, or physiotherapist if something hurts. Playing through pain can make injuries worse.

When Should You See a Physiotherapist?

A physiotherapist can help if you:

- Have pain that doesn't improve after a few days
- Keep getting the same injury
- Limp or can't run normally
- Want to improve strength, balance, or movement to help prevent injuries before they happen

Healthy habits today help you stay on the field tomorrow. Warm up and cool down every practice and game, and keep having fun!

Don't Forget to Cool Down!

Cooling down helps your body recover after exercise by gradually lowering your heart rate and reducing muscle stiffness.

Spend 5 minutes:

- Walking slowly
- Taking deep breaths
- Stretching your calves, hamstrings, quadriceps, hip flexors, and groin (hold each stretch 20-30 seconds, no bouncing)

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