

Katie Johnson: Good morning and welcome to Apple a Day Lake Region Healthcare's Health and Wellness Segment. This is Katie Johnson and joining me as my guest today is Dr. Chris Rott. He's an orthopedic surgeon here at Lake Region Healthcare, brought the anterior approach to hip replacement to our Joint Care Center when he joined our staff here a couple of years ago. We're here to talk all things orthopedics, but maybe a little bit of an emphasis on sports medicine today. Good morning, Dr. Rott.

Dr. Chris Rott: Good morning.

Katie Johnson: It's that time of year. The kids are heading back to school. We're gearing up for athletics season again. We've been talking about sports physicals on the this show, and we've been talking about preparing kids for a healthy back to school. It just seems like Fall's that time we talk about sports more. I want to spend a little bit of time talking with you about as an orthopedic surgeon, when is it an appropriate time for an athlete to see an orthopedic surgeon or a sports medicine doctor?

Dr. Chris Rott: I think the obvious answer is if you get hurt during an athletic activity or have an injury in athletics. That's probably a good time to see a sports medicine doctor. Obviously, in our orthopedic training, we have a little bit more emphasis on sports medicine and those types of things. We can't all know everything, so if you get a little bit more experienced in something, you've just seen more of it. In my residency, I spent a lot of time with a number of sports medicine doctors in the sports medicine department in Grand Rapids, Michigan. You just get a little bit more exposure to the things that you see, and I think that's probably a good time to think about that.

Obviously, our primary care physicians in Fergus Falls are all great. A lot of times, you'll get to us after you see them. They'll say, "I think that maybe having you see someone who has got a little bit more experience in sports medicine would be good," but obviously, the biggest time you'd see an orthopedic surgeon if you have something that needs to have surgical treatment done.

Katie Johnson: With the goal of getting the athlete back to their sport or the thing that they love to do as quickly as possible.

Dr. Chris Rott: Definitely.

Katie Johnson: There's a perception maybe that sports medicine or orthopedics is only for serious athletes. Would you consider that to be true?

Dr. Chris Rott: Not at all. I think it's for anybody who is trying to be athletic. We can be very helpful with that, and the injuries you get from being athletic is sometimes different than injuries you get from falls and other things that happen. We probably see more athletes that are not serious athletes because they're a little bit more prone to injury probably in the grand scheme of things.

Katie Johnson: Speaking of that, the most common injuries that you see.

Dr. Chris Rott: Probably the most common things we see are just the simple sprains and strains that happen from overexerting yourself or from losing your balance or some things like that. We do see some Achilles tendon injuries. That's something that's very common that happens to especially that weekend warrior. We do see a fair number of meniscus tears in knees and shoulder injuries from sports, and then the ACLs come thankfully not very frequently around here, but they are part of our practice, too, and we treat those more serious injuries as we see them.

Katie Johnson: You mentioned the weekend warrior. Let's talk about that concept a little bit. Why is that approach so hard on our bodies, one who's maybe a little bit more sedentary during the week and then just tries to cram all of that activity in on the weekend?

Dr. Chris Rott: Your body, like everything, it's just not ready for that a lot of times. It takes time to build up the strength of the muscles and the bones and the tendons. To get the blood flow to them is probably a really important thing, and if you're not moving a lot during the week, the blood flow just isn't there at the same level as it is when you're trying to be active. That's a lot of times when we get these tendon and ligament injuries from this is because of that tendon ligament is not used to being pulled on so hard and all of a sudden it gets pulled really hard.

The weekend warrior's probably the person that's most likely to get this Achilles tendon rupture because that tendon gets a little bit thin and it gets a little bit weak, and then all of a sudden they're jumping and playing lots and lots of basketball and the tendon just can't take it anymore and it rips. I know we have a lot of hunters in the area. You wouldn't take your gun and then stick it in the cupboard and then pull it out and do nothing to it and then go and try to hunt for a whole week on it. Like everything else, you have to have everything conditioned. Your body can adapt to these things, but it doesn't happen overnight. It takes some time, and you need to build up the strength in things to build to do these activities, which are pretty high impact more safely.

Katie Johnson: That's a great tip for prevention, particularly for adults. Let's talk about kids a little bit more. I think we have the tendency to say, "Oh, they're young. They'll bounce back, but they need to be careful, too, and can sustain some pretty serious injury without the proper building up.

Dr. Chris Rott: Most definitely. Kids probably, as a whole, are a little bit more resilient than adults are, but they're very moldable, especially young kids. They're growing. They have what's called ... We've all heard of open growth plates, and that can change a lot of things for kids, and because of the moldability of their tissues, there are a number of studies coming out in orthopedics now about these Little League pitchers who pitch a lot, and they actually have permanent changes in the range of motion of their shoulder. They're able to turn it back way further than normal, but they can't turn it in near as far as they should, and they're [fineness 00:05:12] is becoming a

serious problem for these younger kids who really hit it hard for a long time.

Like everybody else, kids have to work into things slower. Young kids shouldn't probably be lifting weights a lot, should be a lot lighter, more repetition to condition their bodies. With these open growth plates, there are specific injuries that kids can have where if you have a strong tendon or ligament that's attached to a growth plate that has a very short piece of bone, it actually can disrupt the growth plate and there are specific injuries that happen in children through growth plates that don't affect adults. Kids do need to be careful. I definitely think it's very important that kids are not doing the same thing all the time.

This year-round sports thing in my opinion isn't the best idea. It's really important to be doing different things and to be trying different things and moving your body and asking it to do a variety of activities probably makes the best athlete. A lot of Olympic athletes that I ever heard talks from actually have said they didn't start specializing in their sport until they were 18, 19 years old and they really are still an advocate for kids to do lots of different things and even the top level athletes saying they don't think that kids concentrating on one sport before they're even in their teenage years is a good idea.

Katie Johnson: That's really interesting when we talk about what parents can do to help protect their kids. I think that's one area where as a parent myself, it's good to hear that, that it's okay to perhaps stick up for your child and what's best for your child when coaches or others might be telling you something different.

Dr. Chris Rott: I agree. The biggest thing about kids is they will tell you when they're getting to a point. Most parents know their kids. You know your kids can run a long time before they get tired, but they get to a point, and when they get to the point where they say, "No, I'm really tired," it's time to listen to them because kids are known that in a lot of ways that they can cope and compensate for things for a long time. Then all of a sudden, once they hit their point, then it's done. You really need to listen to your kids and give them time. They'll be able to develop it without pushing them that hard and getting kids hurt young, it sticks with them the rest of their life, and you don't really want a hurt a child early and then take away their ability to have a long career in that from an injury early on.

Katie Johnson: That can be emotional stress related to that for kids, as well.

Dr. Chris Rott: Definitely. I don't know if kids emotionally sometimes don't understand that quite as well, and when they get pushed, I think sometimes but really eager and ambitious adults to try to get everything they can sometimes, that here are kids who are excellent athletes who just are tired of it. It's just not worth it to them anymore, and that isn't obviously the goal for sports. At first should be health and fitness. Wellness is great for kids to keep them active, but it should be fun. That's the biggest thing. It's supposed to be for the long term is teaching kids about team work and being part of a team and the respect that comes with coaches and other players, and there's a lot of things that can be learned, but in the end, it should be

fun.

This kid should be doing this because they enjoy it and they like to do it, and that's what's going to lead them into a long career in that. If it gets to the point where they feel like they have to do it, they lose interest, and I think that is detrimental.

Katie Johnson: One more quick little tip, if you could, both for kids or adults. We're talking about preventing injury, warming up, stretching out. What are your best tips for doing that effectively?

Dr. Chris Rott: Your warm-up is important. Warm-up is probably the most important, and the stretching is probably the most important actually after your activity. Think of warming up. It's just like anything else. It's slow. It's a ladder type step-ways progression where you need to start slowing. The idea is to get the blood flowing to the muscles and to the tendons and the ligaments to allow them to function. You wouldn't start your car and then go racing it down. You'd wait until your car's warmed up. Like anything else, you should start slow, get the blood flowing, get things moving. A good warm-up, you're probably actually a little bit sweaty by the time you're really warmed up and you're thinking, "If you're going to go and do a really high impact activity," but it's important to just start slow and get things going and you'll feel as your body gets warm. Then you can do those things a lot more safely.

Katie Johnson: Great tips for avoiding having to come to the orthopedic department. Obviously, we want healthy, strong athletes that don't need to be sitting on the sidelines at all, but when they do, you really do work with a great team, that you're really a team committed to getting the athlete back as strong as they can possibly be as fast as they possibly can, and that's what it's all about. Thanks for what you do both in our Joint Care Center and in our sports medicine department. Dr. Chris Rott, orthopedic surgeon, my guest today on Apple a Day.

Dr. Chris Rott: Thank you. It was nice to talk to you all.

Katie Johnson: Dr. Christ Rott and Katie Johnson reminding you that there is so much to do here. Stay healthy for it. Have a great day.