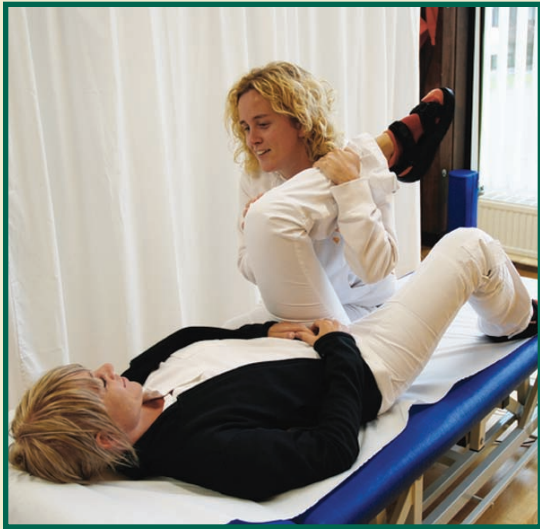


REHAB HEALTH CENTERS: EXCEPTIONAL CARE, EXCEPTIONAL OUTCOMES



With rising insurance premiums and healthcare costs, patient care must contain great consumer value. Many patients fear in this tight economy that they will have to sacrifice quality care to make it affordable. At Doctors Hospital Rehab Health Center, you will find that your time, recovery and providing cost effective health care is a high priority.

Whether a patient is recovering from total joint replacement, vestibular disorder, or just a bad bout of back pain, the physical and occupational therapists are cross-trained in rehab methods and are committed to maximizing the recovery of each patient, eliminating excessive unwarranted visits. Staffed with a comprehensive team of specialty-trained therapists and state-of-the-art equipment, each of the four Rehab Health Centers shares the common goal of excellence in patient care. When it comes to outpatient rehabilitation, it is not enough to just develop a individualized therapy program—Genuine quality care means taking that extra step, following up with patients, and tracking and ensuring their improvement.

Doctors Hospital Rehab Health Center combines top-quality outpatient rehabilitation with exceptional value by measuring treatment outcomes. Each patient entering the Center is assessed for their level of pain, motion, and function. Throughout the care plan, and upon discharge, therapists reevaluate the patient's pain, motion, and function is assessed again along with patient progress to observe clinical effectiveness. Tracking measured outcomes enhances our service to better meet patients' treatment goals.

In 2010, the average of all patients who completed therapy at Doctors Hospital Rehab Health Centers showed a 61% decrease in their pain! The data is not only effective when looking at each patient; it can also be compiled to reveal trends specific to diagnosis, physician, or therapist. Any inconsistencies found can then be analyzed to determine the root cause and appropriate solutions.

If you or someone you love needs physical or occupational therapy, choose the experts at Doctors Hospital Rehab Health Center. Our commitment to top quality care is evident in each of our specialty services:

Physical & Occupational Therapy • Hand Center • Balance & Vestibular Center • Aquatic Therapy Program • Lymphedma Center

For more information, call us at 706-651-2270



A PUBLICATION OF DOCTORS HOSPITAL HUMAN MOTION INSTITUTE

DOCTORS HOSPITAL EARNS GOLD!

Doctors Hospital Receives Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission and Clinical Excellence Award for Orthopedic Surgery from Healthgrades AGAIN!

At Doctors Hospital, the Joint and Spine Center is a center of excellence, offering leading edge surgical and non-surgical treatment for the full range of musculoskeletal injuries. For the third consecutive year, Doctors Hospital has received a Clinical Excellence Award in Orthopedic Surgery and Five Star Ratings for clinical outcomes in Joint Replacement and Overall Orthopedic Care from Healthgrades. In January of 2011, Doctors Hospital's orthopedic program achieved the Joint Commission's coveted Gold Seal of Approval for Spinal Fusion surgery. In 2009, the hospital also received the Gold Seal of Approval for its Hip and Knee Replacement Program.

Doctors Hospital's certifications and awards set it apart both as a regional standout, but also as a national leader in the area of total joint replacement and spine surgery. Being one of eleven hospitals in the state of Georgia that have the knee and hip replacement certification, and one of only two hospitals in Georgia to have spinal fusion certification, patients and physicians can be

Doctors Hospital Receives the Gold Seal of Approval from the Joint Commission for total hip and knee replacements programs.

The HealthGrades award ranks Doctors Hospital in the top 10% in the nation for orthopedic services, three years in a row.



assured that our orthopedic program quality translates into a clinical level of care that results in a great patient experience.

Doctors Hospital has also received its third Clinical Excellence Award from HealthGrades. The nationally recognized healthcare ratings company has given Doctors Hospital five-star ratings for its overall orthopedic services, total knee replacement and hip fracture repair for the third consecutive year. The award again ranks Doctors Hospital in the top 10% in the nation for orthopedic services. These findings were included in the *Thirteenth Annual HealthGrades Hospital Quality in America Study*, which is the most comprehensive study of its kind, analyzing approximately 40 million Medicare discharges from every U.S. hospital from 2007 – 2009.

These designations mean adherence to the most stringent clinical standards of care when it comes to patient education, the use of state-of-the-art technologies and therapy services. A team approach is embraced every step of the way from preventative medicine and treatment to surgery and rehabilitation. This equates to a better understanding of your condition, restoration

of mobility, and improved quality of life.

As the healthcare reform debate continues, transparency of information, additional quality measures, and consumer education are at the heart of those discussions. With the current gap between best practice and actual care, transparent quality measures that allow a consumer to compare hospital performance play an essential role in the healthcare market place. At Doctors Hospital, these quality measures are apparent.

"We are honored to receive both the Joint Commission certification, and certainly, a Clinical Excellence Award, for the third year in a row, from HealthGrades," says Sondra Smith-Lancaster, Vice President of Development at Doctors Hospital. "The real winners, though, are our patients and our community. We have an excellent team of physicians, nurses, therapists and other staff to help people keep the freedom of mobility," she says.

You can visit the Joint and Spine Center on our website. Click on the virtual tour link to see the five star accommodations now available to Joint and Spine patients.

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FROM THE HMI DESK



Total quality care is always a focus at Doctors Hospital but our most recent successes have set us apart from the rest!

Not only has our Joint and Spine Center received its 3rd Clinical Excellence Award continuing to rank Doctors Hospital in the top 10% in the nation, but in January we also received Disease Specific Certification from the Joint Commission, and the Gold Seal of Approval for Spinal Fusion surgery. Another quality indicator and patient satisfaction initiative within our Joint and Spine Center is decreasing pain after total knee replacement. This is a priority for both patients and physicians. Many Doctors Hospital Orthopedists have begun a new periarticular injection that has been proven to provide better pain control allowing patients to return to their normal activities a lot sooner. From our outpatient Rehab Health Center, ensuring top Quality means tracking and analyzing outcomes. You'll read about how and why this is done.

To learn more about Doctors Hospital Human Motion Institute or any of our services, visit www.doctors-hospital.net and click on the Human Motion Institute link.

Thank you,

Elizabeth Lamb

Elizabeth Lamb, Director
Rehab Health Centers & Sports Medicine

MANAGING COMMON SKIN INJURIES IN SPORTS

Whether it is a blister from running a 10K or a gash over the eye while rebounding a basketball, the skin is susceptible to injury in all sports. Injuries to the skin rarely affect athletic performance but are frequent, and painful. Preventing skin injury and properly caring for wounds are common practice in sports medicine.

The integumentary system, or skin, is the largest organ of the body weighing about 6 pounds if removed. The skin has many functions including sensory, thermoregulation, injury protection, water and fat storage, and infection defense.

COMMON SKIN INJURIES

Friction and pressure cause most of the acute and overuse injuries to the skin. There are several categories of skin injury, but abrasions and blisters are observed most frequently. Abrasions are acute injuries caused by shearing or scraping of the skin and can vary in thickness and size. Commonly known as a "strawberry," an abrasion can occur when a baseball player attempts a slide or a basketball player dives on the floor for a loose ball. The severity of the wound depends on the amount of shearing force and the roughness of the surface opposing the skin.

Blisters result from repetitive friction and pressure and can occur in endurance sports, as well as, sports requiring repetitive high-intensity activity. Improper footwear can cause blisters on the toes and feet, while incorrect grip pressure causes blisters to the fingers and hands. Moisture increases the risk of blisters. Regardless of footwear or proper gripping, too much activity, too soon, can result in blisters for the "weekend warrior." The skin should have time to adapt to sport demands progressively.

Lacerations are acute injuries resulting in wounds deeper into the thickness of the skin and have a jagged appearance. Since these injuries penetrate into the thickness of the skin, they can disturb more vascular tissue, causing greater bleeding. Lacerations usually occur from a high-speed or high-mass object contacting a bony surface, such as a boxer receiving a "gash" to the head or face.

CARING FOR WOUNDS

Each sport has equipment or methods practiced to prevent skin injury, but wounds occur and must be treated properly. Once bleeding has stopped, wounds must be evaluated, cleansed, and monitored for healing.

Before care can be given to a wound, direct pressure should be applied to the wound with a towel or sanitary gauze to stop bleeding. Wounds should be observed to determine if they require evaluation by a healthcare professional. Initial medical care may be required if any of the following wound complications are present:

- Bleeding cannot be stopped
- A laceration is deeper than 1/8-1/4 inch or the edges of the skin remain parted
- Wound results in a loss of function
- Wound contains debris that cannot be removed by cleansing
- Large or deep abrasions exposing deep skin tissue and fat tissue

Wounds need to be cleansed to remove debris and prevent infection. Soap and water, sterile water solution, or commercial antiseptic cleanser can be used to remove dirt, grass, and other debris in minor abrasions. Hydrogen peroxide can be used initially to promote wound debridement, but has shown to interfere with the healing process if used regularly. Precaution should be taken to avoid excessively scrubbing



Closeup view of a bruised skin injury known as the "strawberry" abrasion

which could cause increased tissue damage, especially in severe abrasions.

After cleansing wounds, there are a variety of antimicrobial ointments, creams, and dressings to choose from, but the primary goals are to promote healing, prevent infection, and protect wounds from further damage. Antibacterial ointment, such as bacitracin or Neosporin® should be applied and covered with a dressing to keep wounds moist. Moist wounds heal faster and promote less scarring than allowing a dry "scab" to form. Dressings should be changed regularly, reapplying ointment each time. Abrasions and minor lacerations can be cleansed and dressed, however deeper lacerations requires suturing, which closes the wound.

For normal daily activities, a bandage can be applied to secure the dressing. For more demanding activities like physical labor or sports, bandages should cover the dressing then be secured with athletic tape or adhesive. In some sports, padding or special clothing may need to be worn to offer further protection. Depending on the location of the wound or the demand of the sport, wound protection can be compromised, even if covered. Athletes having more severe wounds that cannot be protected should consider discontinuing activity until healing progresses.

Blisters are a unique wound as the body forms a natural bandage over the wound. They formed when friction causes the top two layers of skin to separate, allowing fluid to form between them. These injuries begin with a red appearance know as a "hot spot" then progress to fluid-filled bubbles on the skin. Most blisters form on heels, soles of the feet, and palms of the hand because of friction against shoes and athletic equipment.

Small blisters should be left intact and covered to prevent worsening. Large blisters (>1cm) can be drained to prevent expansion. A sterilized pin should be used to puncture a small hole in the edge of large blisters leaving the skin covering the blister intact to prevent infection. After blister wounds are cleansed, materials such as 2nd Skin® should be applied and secured with tape to protect the area.

SIGNS OF INFECTION

All wounds should be monitored for infection throughout the healing process. When the skin is damaged, bacteria normally present on the body or environmental bacteria can enter the wound causing an infection. There are several types of bacteria, but various stains of methicillin-resistant staphylococcus aureus (MRSA) can be the most serious; they have an antibiotic resistance and can spread aggressively in close-contact settings such as athletics, healthcare facilities, classrooms, and military barracks.

In cases of MRSA, sores may begin as small pustules, sometimes confused as "spider bites", and then develop into larger pustules or abscesses. Wounds displaying the following symptoms should immediately seek medical attention:

- Redness
- Swelling
- Painful
- Warm to the touch
- Full of pus or other drainage
- Accompanied by a fever

Minor wounds occur frequently in sports practices and games and typically can be properly cared for onsite. Gauze, dressing, bandages, and antiseptic cleanser, and antibacterial ointment should be immediately available. Severe wounds and infectious wounds are less common, but do occur. Wounds requiring medical attention should be seen by a physician or can be immediately treated at Doctors Hospital Advanced Wound and Burn Clinic.

Located next to Joseph M. Still Burn Center. Next day appointments available. Walk-ins accepted. To make an appointment or to receive more information, please call 706-863-9595.

PAIN COCKTAIL = INCREASED PATIENT SATISFACTION

Total knee arthroplasty (TKA) is one of the most frequently performed orthopedic surgeries in the United States. This number will continue to grow over the next several years due to the increasing number of individuals afflicted with osteoarthritis. Even though the literature illustrates that TKA has helped improve the active lifestyles of thousands of individuals, there are those who remain hesitant to undergo TKA for fear of considerable post-operative pain. Pain after a total knee replacement (TKR) is usually managed with medication. Narcotics and especially patient-controlled analgesia (PCA) are used for many TKR patients.

But new studies show that using an injection in the tissues around the joint may be a better choice. Researchers report the results of injecting a cocktail of drugs into the knee during the operation. The cocktail is a mixture of drugs. It includes a numbing agent like Novocaine, antibiotics, morphine, and steroids (anti-inflammatory). Orthopedic surgeons at Doctors Hospital's Joint and Spine Center are using this approach with some total knee replacement candidates who meet the criteria.

The cocktail is injected into the joint capsule just before the surgical intervention. Another injection goes into the soft tissues around the joint after the implant is in place.

Pain control using this cocktail isn't much different from the PCA. But postoperative function, motion, and patient satisfaction are all much improved. In fact, more patients in the cocktail group went home sooner. They also used fewer narcotic drugs overall.

When re-examined at six weeks and three months after the surgery, there were no differences between the groups. The authors predict future advances in TKR won't be a less invasive operation. It's more likely that the post-operative period will be managed better.

Reference

Gina Brockenbrough. *Greater Patient Satisfaction with New Periarticular TKA Cocktail Injection. IN Orthopedics Today. August 2007. Vol. 27. No. 8. Pp. 6-7.*