

How to avoid turkey bowl injuries this Thanksgiving

November 21 2013

Every year around this time, Loyola University Medical Center Sports Medicine surgeon Dr. Pietro Tonino sees a spike in sprains, contusions, broken bones and other injuries suffered in Thanksgiving pickup football games.

Many of these injuries are easily preventable, Tonino said. He offers the following tips to reduce the risk of Turkey Bowl injuries:

Touch, not tackle. Tackle football greatly increases the injury risk. Flag football reduces it. The safest option is touch football.

Warm up and stretch. You're more likely to suffer injuries if your muscles are cold. Before kickoff, warm up by jogging, running in place, doing jumping jacks, etc., for a few minutes. Then slowly and gently stretch, holding each stretch for 30 seconds.

Don't wear cleats. When you wear cleats, there's a risk that your foot will be stuck in one position while the rest of your body is moving in a different direction, leading to injury. Leave cleats to professional and competitive players. Wear gym shoes instead.

But do wear mouth guards. They cost only a few dollars and can save hundreds of dollars in dental bills if you get smashed in the mouth.

And loose-fitting clothes. For example, wear sweats instead of jeans. This will make you more flexible to reduce the injury risk.

Act your age. If you're 40, don't try to play like you're still 20. And if you're way out of shape, don't play at all.

Don't drink. Avoid alcohol both before and during the Turkey Bowl.

Don't play hurt. If you get hurt on a play, do not return to action until symptoms are completely gone. You should have no pain, no swelling, full range of motion and normal strength.

Cool down and stretch. At the end of the Turkey Bowl, don't forget to stretch. This will help reduce [muscle soreness](#) the next day.

"Playing in a Turkey Bowl is a great way to get some exercise and burn off those pumpkin pie calories," Tonino said. "But make sure you play smart to stay safe."

Provided by Loyola University Health System

Citation: How to avoid turkey bowl injuries this Thanksgiving (2013, November 21) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2013-11-turkey-bowl-injuries-thanksgiving.html>

This document is subject to copyright. Apart from any fair dealing for the purpose of private study or research, no part may be reproduced without the written permission. The content is provided for information purposes only.