I've Suffered an OVERUSE Injury!!
Now What?

Overuse injuries (otherwise known as chronic) generally are uncomfortable, though usually not extremely painful until they’ve been present for a while! They’re rarely characterized by a specific incident; usually the onset is gradual: some discomfort after a practice or game slowly increases each day that results from doing too much (running on too hard a surface consistently, for example, or working solely on your Tennis serve and overhead swing). Swelling is usually limited, though the area can be tender to touch.

What should I do?

If you’re on campus during a school day, practice, or game, see Aaron Gill, ATC in the Athletic Training Clinic. The Athletic Training Clinic is located in the Wellness Center, on the field level of the Science and Innovation Center. It’s important to have your injury evaluated by a healthcare provider, so that a plan specific to your injury and the resulting issues can be addressed accordingly! Ice will help the pain, but will not fix this type of problem.

What can I do on my own in the first few days after injury?

For overuse injuries, it’s extremely important to identify what is causing the problem: is it jumping, but running is OK? The opposite? Maybe you’re favoring one leg because the other side is weak? An evaluation by MA Athletic Trainer Aaron Gill can help identify the problem. Once the problem activity has been identified, it’s a good idea to avoid that activity for a few days and let the discomfort calm down. Ice is an effective way to reduce pain - Apply for 15-20 minutes at a time.

It’s been a few days, should my treatment change?

Yes! Ice should still be used if your pain persists. However, ice should really be used only when pain comes back now (for example, you’ve sprained your ankle and were walking around the mall, and your ankle is achy/fatigued/mildly more swollen now).

Part of the treatment/management plan will be exercises (strengthening, stretching, or a combination of the 2) to help ensure the problem is kept at bay and doesn’t return. Make sure what you are doing is approved by Aaron!

Can I exercise while injured?

Yes! Aerobic exercise on a machine like the stationary bike, elliptical, or StairMaster is a good way to get some exercise using a controlled motion. Often, these machines can be used whether the injury is to the upper body or lower body.

Unsure which machine you should use? Talk to Aaron!

How do I know when I can return to my normal activities?

Return to activity should be guided by a healthcare provider: MA Athletic Trainer Aaron Gill can help with this guidance! Make sure to check in with him on a regular basis, especially as you begin to feel better!

These recommendations are to be used as general information! Is your discomfort new? Did you suffer an injury, but not sure what happened?

Talk to MA Athletic Trainer Aaron Gill, ATC, for an injury evaluation and development of a treatment plan!