

## MONTHLY TIPS FROM UPMC SPORTS MEDICINE #1: DANCE INJURIES, PREVENTION, & TREATMENT

Dancers are more than performing artists—they are athletes. The strength, speed, and stamina necessary for a dancer to perform at a high level equals that of any competitive athlete.

The physical characteristics of dancers resemble those of high-level athletes, as do the many dance-related injuries they sustain.

### Common Dance Injuries

The majority of dance injuries result from overuse and are commonly caused by repetitive stress and predisposing factors, like weakness or inflexibility.

Typical overuse injuries to the foot, ankle, and lower leg, include:

- Stress fractures
- Tendinopathy
- Sprains

### Causes of Dance Injuries

Factors that contribute to dance injuries include:

- Strength and flexibility deficits
- Poor conditioning
- Improper management of previous injuries
- Poor technique or nutrition
- Changes in training or floor surface

### Preventing Dance Injuries

Help to prevent dance injuries by:

- Getting plenty of rest
- Practicing proper nutrition and hydration
- Wearing proper fitting shoes to protect against conditions like Jones Fracture, and replacing them when they begin to show signs of breaking down
- Addressing injuries early
- Not dancing through pain, as it may be a warning sign of an underlying injury

### Treating Dance Injuries

Treatment of these injuries include:

- Relative rest
- Pain control, as necessary
- Rehabilitation
- Addressing underlying predisposing factors, such as weakness and inflexibility
- Correcting technique

### Services We Offer

- Musculoskeletal screening at the beginning of the dance season to address strength and flexibility deficits
- Correction of technique errors
- Nutrition counseling

To schedule an appointment, or to learn more about UPMC Sports Medicine, visit [UPMCSportsMedicine.com](http://UPMCSportsMedicine.com) or call 1-855-93-SPORT (77678).

*Check in next month for more dance health tips from UPMC Sports Medicine.*

