

The Complete Package

BEACON PROVIDES COMPREHENSIVE CARE TO TEEN ATHLETES

By Amy Thornley

The staff of Beacon Orthopaedics and Sports Medicine would prefer to be there for you long before an injury. “The big thing we’re promoting is prevention,” says Dr. Glen McClung, orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine doctor for Beacon Orthopaedic. This commitment to injury prevention shows in the comprehensive annual physicals Beacon provides to teen athletes each year. In these physicals, doctors evaluate not just muscle and bone of each teen, but also heart, lungs, ears, spinal health and concussion history. These physicals are being provided through July at Beacon locations and several area high schools.

Beacon also provides clinics and training throughout the year to coaches and athletes. While football concussions are in the headlines, McClung warns that concussions can happen in most sports these days. Beacon and the sports training staff work in the schools to teach coaches how to spot a concussion and provide trainers on the sidelines during games to help identify them. Noticing an alarming rise in the number of female athletes experiencing

ACL tears, Beacon now provides ACL Tear Prevention Clinics for any athlete who would like to attend. “We’ve found a significant reduction in ACL injuries with certain plyometric, neuromuscular activities,” says McClung.

By far, the biggest issue Beacon is seeing is the rise of overuse injuries in very young athletes. “A lot of these high school athletes have started to single themselves out as a one-sport athlete, playing in select leagues year-round,” says McClung. When this happens, the same muscles are used in the same manner without a break, leading to injuries. According to the American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine, almost 50 percent of all injuries among middle and high school athletes are due to overuse. The good news is that such injuries are entirely preventable by encouraging teens to play more than one sport or even take



Dr. Glen McClung

a true off-season, just like the pros. “Even professional athletes don’t play baseball year-round,” says McClung.

The goal of Beacon Orthopaedics is the same as yours, the same as any parent: to see teen athletes fully enjoy their high school career. “Not everyone gets to go to college to play a sport,” explains McClung. “High school is a really special time in these athletes’ lives because it’s an opportunity to participate in an activity you love, on a competitive level, for just four years. Our goal is to get them back out there in the safest but most expedient fashion we can.” ■