OrthoAlabama
Spine & Sports

Patient-Centered Care Begins Here

PREVENT & PREPARE FOR MOUNTAIN BIKING INJURIES

8 Steps for Safe Shredding

Mountain biking can be dangerous, but preparation and taking the right precautions will help reduce your risk of injury. Diving headfirst without taking the time to educate yourself can mean the difference between a day out riding or a day in with an injury.

Prevention Tips

PLAN AHEAD

Without knowing the path, it can be nearly impossible to make the right choices quickly enough. Look into the trail you plan to ride so you know what to expect. Consider the time it takes to get to the end of the trail, and add some time on your way back since you will likely be tired.

SUPPLEMENTAL EXERCISE & STRETCHING

High-impact sports like mountain biking can put strain on muscles, ligaments, and connecting tissues, especially when you don't stretch and maintain fitness. Warm up for ten minutes and do full-body stretches beforehand. Stay fit by implementing exercises to build your musculoskeletal strength and resilience.

HYDRATE & ENERGIZE

Dehydration can cause fatigue, which slows your reaction time and impairs your senses. Drink plenty of fluids before, during, and after your ride. It isn't always easy, so try using a hydration pack for easily accessible fluids, and avoid flavored drinks, as they may make you thirstier. To stay energized, eat a large meal 2 to 3 hours before longer rides and a small meal 1 to 3 hours before a shorter ride.

BALANCE

Getting out of your seat and putting the weight on your pedals helps stabilize your center of gravity. This reduces the risk of crashes, especially in rougher terrain where the path can be unpredictable. If you are losing balance or a crash is happening, lift one of your legs over the bike frame so both legs are on one side, and jump off the side of the bike, avoiding obstacles.

Preparing for When an Injury Happens

KEEP SOMEONE INFORMED OF YOUR WHEREABOUTS

When taking rides, it is important to inform someone of where you plan to go and how long you plan to be out. This way, even if you sustain an injury that makes you unconscious, someone else can call for help from emergency professionals.

CLOSE THE TRAIL

If you are riding with others or another rider has found you injured, have them stand further up on the trail to stop other riders. This will prevent further injury to yourself and injury to others who may come over a hill and have to stop suddenly.

PACK A FIRST AID KIT & KNOW HOW TO USE IT

Performing first aid in the critical moments after an injury could save a life, including your own. Before gearing up, be sure your first aid kit is fully stocked and that you are familiar with first aid basics, like using a tourniquet to stop excess bleeding.

KNOW YOUR LOCAL EMERGENCY NUMBERS

Keeping related emergency numbers on your phone or somewhere accessible, like taped to your water bottle, is crucial, as the internet may not be available in the parks or on the trails. Before starting your ride, make sure you get the numbers for the local bike patrol, emergency dispatch, or search and rescue.

For more information, scan the QR code.

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Walk-In Clinic

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