

SPORTS INJURY 101 Clintonians focus on sports injuries



cont. from page 22

Fall in Mississippi brings opportunity for increased sports-related injuries

Many young athletes have muscular imbalance and lower extremity weakness. There are numerous exercise programs and ACL prevention programs that work to decrease their chance of injuries, Hurt said.

"They can increase your mind's ability to know where your knees and lower extremities are in space, and they can decrease your muscle imbalance."

If a child takes a hard hit to the head and reports blurry vision or ringing in his or her ears, it could be a concussion.

"Act on the extreme end of caution," Hurt said. "They will be pulled out of play. Often, the trainer at the game is the first one to evaluate them. If there's any question, they should be held out, and we call it a concussion."

UMMC runs a postgame high school sports medicine clinic from 9 until 11p.m. every Friday night during football season in the orthopaedic suite at University Physicians Pavilion. It's a resource for metro-area parents who want their children examined right away for game injuries that are not traumatic, Hurt said.

The clinic is staffed by UMMC sports medicine experts, who give free initial examinations to any athletes needing attention. X-rays and physical therapy services also are available. Examples of conditions treated include suspected concussion, bumps and bruises, broken bones, ligament and ACL tears, and tendon tears.

"We can wrap their knees and ankles, get them crutches and get X-rays to confirm injuries," Hurt said. "We can set up an MRI to be done the next day, or that Monday. It expedites their care."

"What's also great about the clinic is that it brings a multitude of sports medicine experts together to examine

and communicate with the injured athlete and their parents," said Jeff Martinez, the Medical Center's supervisor of sports medicine.

"Everyone on our team is able to offer their expertise at the same time, rather than having the patient come back to see different specialists. The physician can give a diagnosis, the physical therapist can offer some at-home therapy for the weekend, and the athletic trainer can prepare treatment and rehab plans to begin on Monday at the athlete's school."

The goal is for athletes whose injuries aren't extreme to be treated at the clinic instead of an emergency room, where wait times can vary. Even if a serious condition isn't detected, a prompt medical exam can bring peace of mind to a student and family. Walk-ins are welcome, but if possible, call ahead at 601-815-4721.

"The clinic also helps coaches prepare their teams for the coming weeks," Martinez said. "By getting injury status and care started sooner, coaches are better able to begin planning for the upcoming games."

Mississippi is lucky to be a state where football is king, Hurt said. Almost every school has a physician, a skilled athletic trainer or both on the sidelines. UMMC staffs between five and ten metro-area football games each Friday of the season.

"For a lot of kids, this is the most exciting time of their life," Hurt said. "Athletics is very important to them. They might not play college ball, but they will tell their grandchildren about playing football when they were in high school."

"Anything you can do to expedite their care and get them back on the field is good for them."

cont. from page 23

Soccer players at Mississippi College participate in UMMC clinical trial

MC junior Lauren Kate Carter, twenty, of Tupelo plays the position of midfielder on the Lady Choctaws squad. She's delighted to participate in the research. "I love it," says the Tupelo High graduate. "I'm really into science and physical therapy."

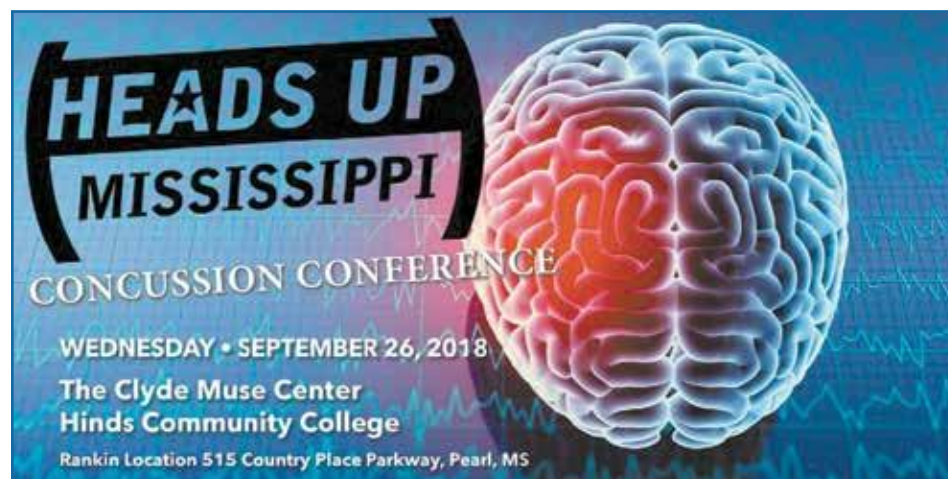
In recent years, Carter used her head in soccer games for the Tupelo High Golden Wave team at Tupelo High and at MC. "It is dangerous, no doubt. But we all have a passion to win."

The UMMC trial is officially called "Sensorimotor Training for Injury Prevention in Collegiate Soccer Players" and is gaining positive national exposure on ClinicalTrials.gov.

Like Longabaugh, Kevin Johns, the successful men's soccer coach at Mississippi College, applauds the UMMC research.

"This will help us," says freshman Carlos Hernandez, eighteen, of Spain. He's a midfielder on the MC men's soccer team.

At the trial's start, Dr. Reneker and her team performed baseline testing on soccer players that examined movement control of their eyes, and ability to use specific muscles in their neck in a controlled way. The students will be tested following the four weeks of training to see if there's improvement. Mississippi College players also will be given homework exercises via video instruction on their cell phones.



UMMC will host the Heads Up, Mississippi Concussion Conference on September 26 in Pearl. Organizers say the event is targeted for physicians, physician assistants, psychologists, nurse practitioners, nurses, physical therapists, occupation therapists, speech and language pathologists, athletic trainers, coaches and athletic directors. For more information and registration links, please visit www.TheClintonCourier.net.

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