Epidemiology
Soccer is the world's most popular sport with a significant number of players younger than 18 years old. As recently as 2012 over 780,000 high school students participated in soccer in the United States. Additionally, the gender gap is closing. As of 2008 48% of participants were girls. Finally, Florida had the 2nd highest participation rate in Southern states (region III) behind Texas at over 108,000!

With such popularity comes injury. High School athletes sustain more than 1.4 million injuries annually with a significant portion of soccer injuries occurring in the lower extremities.

Common Injuries-Lower Extremities
Common injuries in youth, adolescent, and High School Soccer Players include:

- Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injury
- Ankle Injuries including sprains
- Stress fractures, specifically to the Tibia and Pubic Bones
- Shin Splints (Medial Tibial Stress Syndrome)

Common Injuries-Upper Extremity

- Wrist sprains and Fractures from falling on an outstretched arm
- Shoulder dislocations

Common Injuries-Head and Neck

- Cuts/Lacerations
- Bruising
- Neck Sprains
- Concussions

Heading and Concussions?

- There is no definitive evidence that heading a soccer ball causes concussions
- There is no definitive evidence that wearing headgear of any kind or using a mouthguard will prevent concussions.
- There are concerns that headgear may cause more aggressive heading and head challenges, leading to increased risk of injury.
Prevention and Treatment of Injuries

- Have a pre-season physical examination
- Minimize overuse as over 10% on injuries can occur without proper rest
- Hydrate adequately — waiting until you are thirsty is often too late!
- Stop and see a medical professional if you suffer an injury
- Speak with a sports medicine professional or athletic trainer if you have any concerns about injuries or prevention strategies

2. US Youth Soccer (usyouthsoccer.org)

How do I schedule an appointment to be evaluated for a soccer related injury?

Please contact us at the sports injury hotline at (352) 265-OSMI to schedule an appointment with one of our sports medicine specialists.

OSMI & Shands UF Sports Medicine Providers

**Kevin Farmer, MD**
UF Team Physician

**Michael Moser, MD**
UF Team Physician

**M.Seth Smith, MD**
Co-Medical Director of High School Outreach Program

**Jason L. Zaremski, MD**
Co-Medical Director of High School Outreach Program

**Dan Herman, MD, PhD**

**Bryan Prine, MD**
Director of OrthoCare After Hours Clinic

**Kevin Vincent, MD, PhD**
Director of Running Medicine Clinic