THE BEST MDs for TODAY

Chicago Top Doctors

350 PHYSICIANS, IN 55 SPECIALTIES, AS CHOSEN BY THEIR PEERS

Plus

JAMES McMANUS: SAVING MY DAUGHTER'S EYE

SCHOOL LUNCHES 101 — WHAT YOUR KIDS EAT

DISH: THE HOTTEST RESTAURANTS

Dr. Brian J. Cole
Sports Medicine,
Rush University Medical Center

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A Sporting Chance

BRIAN J. COLE
Sports Medicine, Rush University Medical Center

AS DIRECTOR OF the Cartilage Restoration Center at Rush, Brian Cole uses cutting-edge orthopedic, rehabilitative, and transplant techniques to treat shoulder, elbow, and knee injuries, while also serving as one of the team physicians for the Bulls, the White Sox, and the Rush, the local arena-football franchise. He lives in Lincoln Park with his wife, Emily, an assistant state's attorney, and their three children. "My family loves going to the games," says Cole, 43. "My kids don't know what it's like to sit in a regular seat. They have no idea how good they have it."

Q. Do you have any tips for the average weekend athlete?
A. I think cross-training is important, rather than just focusing on one exercise, like running. Don't give up running, but find some alternatives, like swimming or ellipticals. Nutrition is clearly important, but people overlook it.

Q. If you do suffer a sports injury, when should you see a doctor?
A. If there is a joint involved and significant pain that does not go away quickly; if there is swelling, stiffness, or any numbness or tingling — those are things that need to be evaluated. You should see someone — it could be your primary-care physician — who can assess whether this is something that needs immediate attention or something that can be watched to the point of resolution.

Q. What is the impact of age on a person's ability to participate in athletic activities?
A. A component that often gets overlooked is the emotional aspect of what happens as we age. I'm going through it myself. I think about it every single day: what would it mean if I couldn't run, if I couldn't lift weights, if I couldn't be active with my kids? You would be amazed at the psychological impact that something as simple as knee pain can have on an individual. So there is nothing better than when a patient comes in for a follow-up and says, "You changed my life, because I no longer have pain."

Q. What is different about treating a professional athlete?
A. The first thing is, you always need to look at these people as patients, as individuals with physical problems. But you are trying to safely return them to play and you are trying to move very quickly. So we do things that we obviously wouldn't do to the general population to try and encourage rapid healing and rehabilitation.

Q. Last March, after Eddy Curry, the Bulls' young center, experienced potentially life-threatening heart problems, the team sat him down through the end of the season and the playoffs before finally trading him to the New York Knicks. John Paxson, the team's general manager, was criticized for how he handled the situation. Was that criticism justified?
A. We wanted to do the right thing for Eddy Curry as a human being. John Paxson never let the goal of "we have to win a game" usurp letting all the physicians involved make what they felt was the right medical decision. He did for Eddy what he would have done for his own son.

THE DOCTORS LIST

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ANITA GEWURZ Pediatric allergy and immunology; immune deficiency. Rush. 312-942-6296.
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PAUL A. GREENBERGER Allergic bronchopulmonary aspergillosis; asthma; anaphylaxis; drug allergy. Northwestern. 312-695-8624.
PAUL KENTOR Asthma; sinus disorders; hives. Evanston. 847-634-1690.

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JOSEPH V. MESSER Coronary artery disease; preventive cardiology. Rush. 312-563-3233.
JOHN F. MORAN Coronary artery disease; con-

Abbreviations

- ACL: anterior cruciate ligament
- ADD: attention deficit disorder
- ADHD: attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
- AIDS: acquired immune deficiency syndrome
- ALS: amyotrophic lateral sclerosis; also called Lou Gehrig's disease
- COPD: chronic obstructive pulmonary disease
- CRPS: complex regional pain syndrome
- DES: diethylstilbestrol
- DO: doctor of osteopathy
- GERD: gastroesophageal reflux disease
- HIV: human immunodeficiency virus
- IVF: in vitro fertilization
- LASIK: laser-assisted in situ keratomileusis
- RSD: reflex sympathetic dystrophy
- SLE: systemic lupus erythematosus

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