

EMBRACING CHALLENGES AND ACHIEVING GOALS



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UNDERSTANDING JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY: A COMPREHENSIVE GUIDE

Joint pain is a common issue that can significantly impact your quality of life, especially as you age. In a recent national [survey](#), about one-third of adults reported experiencing [joint pain](#) within the past 30 days. The most frequently reported areas of discomfort were knee, shoulder, and hip pain. While the pain may be tolerable initially, before you know it, you might find yourself sitting on the sidelines while your loved ones continue their adventures.

If you've started to feel like you're missing out on what you need and want to be doing, it's crucial to explore your healthcare options now. Proactive intervention is key when it comes to joint pain. While conservative treatments such as physical therapy and lifestyle modifications are often the first line of defense, they may not always provide long-term relief.



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MAIN ARTICLE

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What to Do When You Have Joint Pain

Since joint pain can stem from several different sources, obtaining an accurate diagnosis is crucial. Physical therapists and orthopedic surgeons have the training and experience to investigate the cause of the pain and conduct thorough joint examinations to pinpoint the issue. Additional studies, such as X-rays and MRI scans, are often needed to differentiate soft tissue, cartilage, and bone problems.

If the pain is attributed to joint arthritis, physical therapy becomes an invaluable tool in managing joint discomfort. Physical therapy can aid in muscle strengthening and enhance mobility, providing significant relief. However, it's important to understand that it cannot reverse the effects of a degenerated joint. Factors contributing to joint issues—such as arthritis, osteonecrosis, and trauma—cannot be fully rectified by physical therapy alone. Additionally, factors like age, gender, and obesity can heighten the risk of joint damage.

When conservative treatments such as physical therapy fail to provide relief, joint replacement surgery may be a viable option to restore function, relieve pain, and allow you to live the active lifestyle you desire. As your partner in health, our Bay State Physical Therapy team is here to guide and educate you on your journey to improved mobility.



When Is It Time to Consider Joint Replacement Surgery?

So, when is it time to take the next step? Joint replacement surgery becomes a consideration when joint pain and stiffness significantly impair your daily activities and quality of life. Common indicators that it may be time to consider surgery include:

- Persistent pain despite conservative treatments like physical therapy, medications, and lifestyle modifications
- Difficulty performing routine tasks such as walking, climbing stairs, or getting up from a chair
- Avoiding activities you enjoy
- Joint deformity, instability, or stiffness that limits your range of motion and affects mobility
- Sleep deprivation secondary to pain

If you're experiencing these symptoms, consulting with your physical therapist about your next steps is an ideal choice. With their extensive knowledge of your medical history and their pulse on the most recent advancements in orthopedic care, your physical therapist is perfectly qualified to help guide you toward an orthopedic surgeon who can help you determine if joint replacement surgery is the right option for you.



Read our Medical Spotlight to learn more about *Trends and Advancements in Joint Replacement Surgery* by Thomas King, MD.

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MAIN ARTICLE

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THE ROLE OF PHYSICAL THERAPY IN JOINT REPLACEMENT SURGERY

With physician offices and surgery centers as busy as ever, it's time to make a plan. Physical therapy is an excellent way to ensure the best possible outcome for your planned procedure. From prehabilitation programs to advanced rehabilitation programs, physical therapy combines the latest medical expertise with collaborative knowledge of your unique needs to help you prepare for and recover from surgery.

Prehabilitation

[Prehabilitation](#) consists of a carefully crafted therapy program that prepares your entire body for surgery. [Working with a physical therapist before surgery](#) can be incredibly beneficial. In the weeks or months before surgery, prehabilitation can:

- **Improve Function**– Physical therapists understand surgical interventions and their impacts on the body. In addition to building strength before surgery, your body will benefit post-surgically, too.
- **Increase Mobility**– Your time spent in prehab will help maximize your range of motion and flexibility. This is especially important as increased mobility will help you regain your normal function following surgery.
- **Provide Relief**– As you prepare your body for surgery, mobility and strengthening exercises can reduce your pain to manageable levels.
- **Strengthen and Prepare**– Improve overall strength, especially in your core and the other areas not undergoing surgery. This will help you handle the added workload from utilizing mobility devices such as crutches, walkers, slings, or braces following surgery.

With its significant effects on function, mobility, and strength, prehab can accelerate post-operative recovery and reduce time spent in the hospital after surgery. That's a win for everyone!

Rehabilitation

Physical therapy following orthopedic surgery is crucial for the best possible surgical outcomes. During your [post-surgical care](#), your physical therapist will:

- Help ensure safety at home
- Increase mobility and strength
- Ease pain and avoid opioids
- Prevent secondary issues that can delay healing

Your physical therapist will work directly with your surgeon to understand the findings and outcome of your operation. Using this information, they'll work with you to establish a program that sets short- and long-term goals to help you [return to optimal function](#) and the activities you love. **To ensure you can stay on target for your recovery timeline, schedule your physical therapy evaluation and follow-up care well in advance.**



CONQUER JOINT PAIN AND REGAIN YOUR LIFE

Joint pain can significantly impact daily life, affecting mobility and overall well-being. When conservative treatments fail to provide relief, joint replacement surgery becomes a viable option to restore function and relieve discomfort. For those experiencing joint pain, seeking guidance from your physical therapist and exploring treatment options is key to regaining mobility and enhancing quality of life. Whether through conservative measures or joint replacement surgery, taking proactive steps toward better joint health is essential for maintaining and enjoying life to the fullest.

Remember, you don't have to let joint pain hold you back. Take control of your joint health today and explore the options available to you. Your journey to improved mobility and optimal health is closer than you may realize. Contact your [nearest Bay State Physical Therapy location](#) or [click here](#) to schedule your evaluation.



MEDICAL SPOTLIGHT: THOMAS KING, MD

Trends and Advancements in Joint Replacement Surgery

Dr. Thomas King is an innovative orthopedic surgeon who, along with Kathleen Leavitt, PA-C, co-founded the AVATAR Rapid Recovery Program. Dr. King has special expertise and extensive experience in total knee, hip, and shoulder replacement and arthroscopic surgery of the knee and shoulder. After completing his College, Medical School, General Surgical, and Orthopedic training at Harvard, he joined the Harvard Medical School Faculty.

In recent years, there has been a noticeable shift in the demographics of patients undergoing joint replacement surgery. Traditionally, joint replacement procedures were primarily performed on older adults experiencing age-related wear and tear on their joints. However, several trends have emerged that are reshaping the landscape of joint replacement surgery:

1. Increasing Demand Among Younger Patients

One significant trend is the rising demand for joint replacement surgery among younger patients. While age-related factors causing osteoarthritis still account for a sizable portion of joint replacement surgeries, an increasing number of younger adults are seeking surgical intervention to address joint pain and dysfunction caused by arthritis that is secondary to sports injuries, trauma, and genetic conditions.

2. Enhanced Longevity and Active Lifestyles

As life expectancy continues to rise, individuals are placing greater emphasis on maintaining active and healthy lifestyles. Joint replacement surgery offers the opportunity to eliminate pain and regain mobility, allowing patients to continue participating in activities they enjoy. As a result, more individuals are opting for joint replacement surgery at a younger age to preserve their quality of life.

3. Tailored Treatment Approaches with Integrated Care Services

Advancements in technology have allowed orthopedic surgeons to adopt a more personalized approach to joint replacement surgery and the rehabilitation services that follow. Whether it's selecting the most appropriate implant type, customizing surgical techniques, or optimizing post-surgical rehabilitation protocols with your physical therapist, personalized care is crucial when considering joint replacement surgery, leading to better outcomes and patient satisfaction.

4. Improved Implant Technology and Surgical Techniques

Advancements in implant technology and surgical techniques have made joint replacement surgery a viable option for a broader range of patients. Innovations such as durable implant materials, minimally invasive procedures, and a comprehensive team approach such as [A.V.A.T.A.R.®](#) (Alignment of Vital Assets To Accelerate Recovery) have improved outcomes and shorter recovery times, making joint replacement surgery more appealing to patients of all ages. A.V.A.T.A.R.® Surgery is an innovative approach that combines advanced technology with personalized care to optimize outcomes.

As a patient considering joint replacement surgery, it's important to realize you have many choices. Whether you've had a previous traditional joint replacement and are considering another, are just getting started with your research, or are looking for a second opinion, our team is here to help you. We aim to ensure that all patients reach their optimal health, and we'd be pleased to answer your questions, so please [contact us](#) at any time.



Dr. Thomas King

Over the past five years, Dr. King and Kathleen Leavitt, PA-C, and Dr. Moby Parsons, co-founders of [King & Parsons](#) (at the Knee Hip and Shoulder Center), have pioneered AVATAR Rapid Recovery after the Same Day Total Joint Replacement. Dr. King's experience of over 9000 joint replacements has allowed his patients to walk and do stairs immediately after total joint replacement, go home within hours of the surgery with no overnight hospital stay, and achieve the same level of recovery in 3 weeks that normally takes 3 to 6 months. By orchestrating the many facets of the surgical and rehabilitation process, he has documented leading outcomes after a faster recovery and an earlier return to work and avocations. [Learn more](#)



Dr. Moby Parsons

Dr. Parsons is the co-founder of [King & Parsons](#), specializing in primary and revision joint replacement of the shoulder, hip, knee, and elbow. He also performs shoulder arthroscopy, fracture reconstruction, evaluation of failed prior surgery, and nonoperative treatment of all disorders of these joints.



**Kathleen Leavitt
PA-C**

Kathy is the co-founder/co-manager of the [Knee, Hip and Shoulder Center](#), and co-creator with Thomas King, MD of AVATAR Rapid Recovery. With her vast experience and expertise, Kathy is a vital member of the care team.

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SEASONAL TIPS

GET A GRIP ON YOUR ELBOW PAIN

Whether you're an ace on the court or you've never picked up a racquet in your life, your elbow pain may be lateral epicondylitis (aka, tennis elbow).

What is Lateral Epicondylitis?

Tennis elbow is a painful overuse condition of the muscles that allow your wrist and elbow to extend. These muscles attach on the outside (lateral) portion of your elbow on the rounded, bony prominence (epicondyles). These muscles control movement at the wrist and elbow and are also involved in gripping activities and rotational movements of the forearm.

How Tennis Elbow Develops

Tennis elbow is a form of tendinitis, a medical term to describe inflammation or irritation of a tendon. Tendons are connective tissues that attach muscle to bone. When tendons are used repeatedly in the same motion, they become inflamed and painful at the point where they attach to the bone. Tendinitis can occur at any tendon/bone connection in the body, with some of the most common areas of tendinitis occurring at the knee, hip, shoulder, and elbow.

Tennis elbow can be caused by recreational activities, such as tennis or gardening, or from occupations with repetitive motions such as painting, automotive mechanics, or assembly line work.

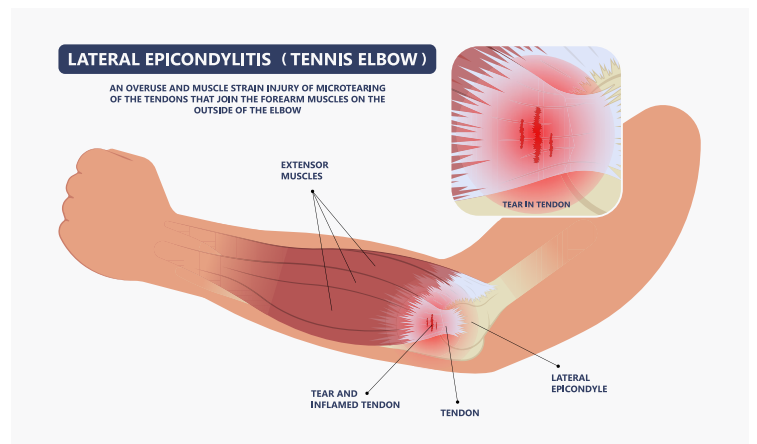
What Does It Feel Like?

The pain often feels sharp and burning near the elbow and can radiate down into your forearm and wrist. With severe tennis elbow, symptoms can make it difficult to hold objects, even those as light as a cup of water!

Other symptoms can include:

- Stiffness in the elbow, especially when straightening the arm
- Weakness in the forearm, wrist, or hand
- Pain when twisting or bending your arm (for instance, turning a doorknob or opening a jar)
- Swelling of the elbow that can be tender to touch

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SEASONAL TIPS

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HOW PHYSICAL THERAPY CAN HELP

Tennis elbow is a very common condition that physical therapists treat—reducing pain and improving function through a variety of methods. During a thorough evaluation, your therapist will ask you questions about when your pain/symptoms first started. With your long-term goals in mind, they'll create a customized care plan to reduce your pain through services such as:

THERAPEUTIC TECHNIQUES: These may include therapeutic massage, [instrument-assisted soft tissue management \(IASTM\)](#), the Graston Technique, or [trigger point therapy](#). Other care options include [dry needling](#), ice massage, and [electrical stimulation](#) for pain management and joint mobilization. These hands-on services will improve blood flow to the impacted tissues and promote healing from within.

STRETCHING: Full joint and soft tissue mobility is an important aspect of regaining normal function. Your physical therapist will select appropriate [stretches](#) for you and teach you how to perform these on your own.

STRENGTHENING: In many cases involving tennis elbow, there's often a strength imbalance in the forearm muscles. Muscle imbalance occurs when opposing muscle groups have significantly different levels of strength, which can lead to pain and dysfunction. Your physical therapist will assess your strength and prescribe exercises uniquely tailored to your body to improve strength and promote a better balance.

EDUCATION: Conditions such as tennis elbow are completely avoidable, and part of your care plan will include education on how to prevent your pain from returning.

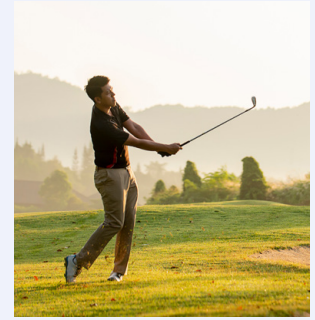
RELIEF IS WITHIN REACH

Physical therapists are experts in injury prevention and tissue healing. As you progress through your care and prepare for discharge, the main focus of your sessions will be discussing the movements and activities that can aggravate your condition. Your physical therapist will educate you on activity modifications to assist with your daily tasks.

Tennis elbow is a pesky problem that can make work and play a challenge. While you may be able to manage the pain initially, ignoring symptoms can lead to prolonged pain. With your trusted physical therapist on your team, you'll be back on the court before you know it. If elbow pain limits you, contact your [nearest Bay State Physical Therapy location](#) or [click here](#) to schedule your evaluation.

WHAT IS GOLFER'S ELBOW?

Both [tennis elbow](#) and [golfer's elbow](#) can cause severe discomfort when you grasp items with your hand and when you lift or twist objects. They also have similar causes and respond to very similar treatment plans that your physical therapist will create. The difference is where you feel your pain- either the inner area or the outer area of your elbow.



Either condition involves injuries to your forearm's tendons after overuse or trauma. The tendons attach your forearm muscles to your elbow bone. They work as you grip, lift or twist objects. A weakened tendon means greater stress and can cause pain. The result can be tennis elbow or golfer's elbow.

Tennis Elbow vs. Golfer's Elbow: Lateral Epicondylitis vs. Medial Epicondylitis

While the medical term for tennis elbow is 'lateral epicondylitis', the term for golfer's elbow is 'medial epicondylitis'. It's simple enough to decode these technical terms. "Lateral" is a medical word for "outer," while "medial" is a medical word for "inner." In the simplest of terms, the tennis elbow is inflammation on the end of the outer elbow, and a golfer's elbow is inflammation on the end of the inner elbow.

ASK THE EXPERT

Your physical therapist is an expert in the musculoskeletal system and will help you understand your unique symptoms based on your diagnosis. Don't let a short-term injury turn chronic in nature. Choose physical therapy today to help you get back on the court or course with less pain and improved function.

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EXERCISES OF THE MONTH

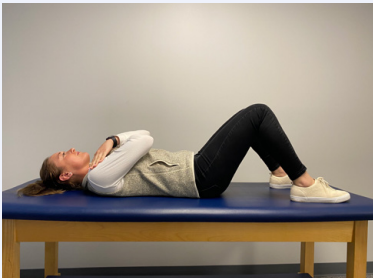
LUMBAR SPINE & TRUNK MOBILITY

Got an aching back? You're not alone. In fact, you're among the [85% of people](#), at any given point, who are going to have some degree of back pain annually. And you can't simply chalk it up to age. Our sedentary way of life—with prolonged sitting at school, work, or during long car trips—can easily result in back pain. So, what can you do?

Adding trunk stability exercises and stretches can have a big effect on improving your comfort by strengthening abdominal and back muscles and improving your flexibility and balance. To help you make the most of summer, [Cathy Sullivan, PT, MSPT](#), our [Bay State Physical Therapy, Plymouth](#) Clinic Manager, has provided a few strength and flexibility exercises for your low back and trunk.



We recommend you do these exercises in a safe and comfortable setting. Check with your physical therapist if you have any questions or concerns when performing these exercises.



BRIDGES

- Lie on your back with your knees bent and arms across your chest
- Tighten your lower abdominals and gluteal muscles
- Raise your hips off the surface creating a "bridge" with your body
- Hold this position for 2-3 seconds
- Slowly lower back to the floor, ensuring proper control with your breathing

Repeat for 2-3 sets of 10 repetitions



PRESS UPS

- Lie on your stomach with your hands flat on the floor under your shoulders
- Press up with your arms, fully extending your elbows while letting your hips relax as your upper body rises off the floor
- Avoid contracting or engaging your gluteal muscles
- Hold this position for 1-2 seconds

Repeat this motion 10 times



PRONE ALTERNATING HIP EXTENSIONS

- Lie on your stomach, keeping your knees straight and supporting your forehead on your hands to maintain a neutral spine position
- Lift your right leg up while keeping it straight
- Slowly lower the leg back down
- Repeat this motion on your left leg
- Hold each straight leg lift for 2-3 seconds

Repeat for 2-3 sets of 10 lifts on each leg

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EXERCISES OF THE MONTH

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**HIP FLEXOR STRETCH**

- Stand up straight and place your right foot on a raised surface in front of you, with your toes facing forward
- Your left leg is on the floor, with your toes facing forward as well
- Bend your right knee and shift your body weight forward
- Try to note a comfortable stretch in the front of your left thigh
- Hold for 30-60 seconds

Repeat 2-3 times on each leg**HAMSTRING STRETCH**

- Lie flat on your back with both legs straight
- Place a strap or band around the ball of your foot
- Using your upper body, raise the leg off the floor, keeping the leg straight until you feel a gentle stretch in the back of the leg
- Hold for 30-60 seconds

Repeat 2-3 times on each leg**PIRIFORMIS STRETCH**

- Sit up straight at the edge of a chair with one ankle resting on the opposite knee
- While keeping your lower back straight, slowly lean forward, hinging at your hips
- Try to note a comfortable stretch in gluteal region of the crossed leg
- Hold for 30-60 seconds

Repeat 2-3 times on each leg

If you're unable to be as active as you'd like due to back pain, you don't have to accept sitting out on life. Back pain may not be life-threatening, but it doesn't have to threaten the life you want to live. As your partner in health, our team is just a call or click away. [Contact your nearest Bay State Physical Therapy location](#) or [click here](#) to request an appointment.

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SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

UNLOCKING OFF-SEASON POTENTIAL

When the final whistle blows on another exciting sports season, young athletes enter a crucial phase: the off-season. This pause from high-stakes games and weekly practices is more than just downtime; it's an opportunity to focus on recovery. If you're looking for ways to make the most of the time ahead, this article is for you!

Understanding the Off-Season

While the allure of year-round play may be strong, the off-season provides a crucial window to focus on injury prevention and foundational skills. Unlike the grueling demands of competitive play, the off-season should prioritize sharpening skills and targeting overall strength and conditioning. This focus reduces the risk of injury and enhances athleticism, setting the stage for peak performance when the season resumes.

Recharge and Recover

One of the most crucial aspects of the off-season is rest and recovery. After months of pushing their bodies to the limit, athletes (especially those with growing bodies) need this time to recharge and rejuvenate. However, rest does not mean complete inactivity. Instead, it's about finding a balance between relaxation and low-impact training. This could include activities like yoga, swimming, or even learning a new sport—anything that is fun and keeps the body moving without adding excessive physical or emotional strain.

Strength: The Off-Season Ally

Strength is the backbone of athletic performance, and the off-season is the perfect time to build it. By challenging muscles with resistance, athletes can build a solid foundation of strength that not only prevents injuries but also translates into improved performance on the field. Bodyweight exercises like squats, lunges, and push-ups are excellent starting points for young athletes. The focus should be on mastering movement patterns rather than isolating specific muscles.

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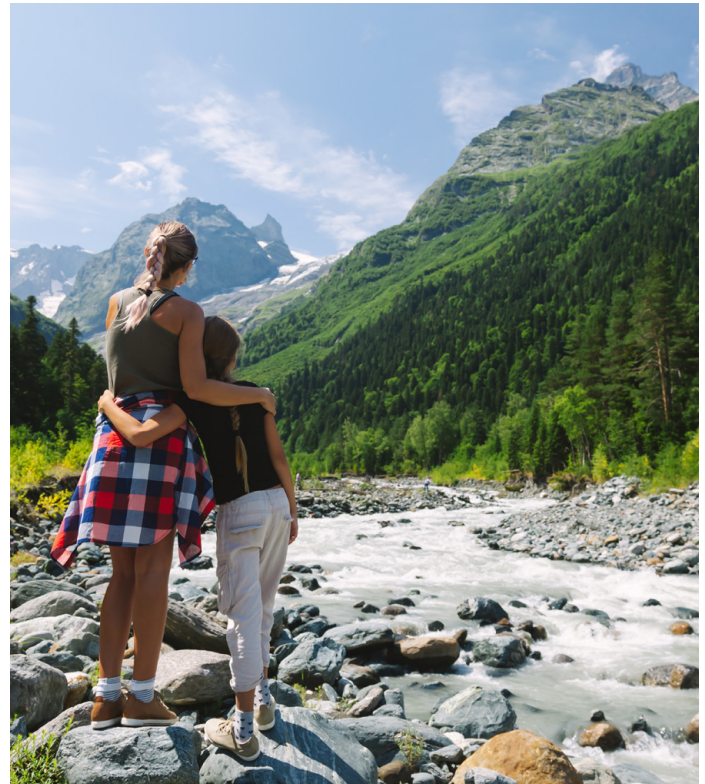
SPORTS SPOTLIGHT

OFF-SEASON SURVIVAL GUIDE

Here are five tips to help you create a game plan for off-season success:

- 1 Embrace Rest:** Recognize the importance of rest in the recovery process and encourage your athlete to prioritize sleep, nutrition, and mental relaxation.
- 2 Quality Over Quantity:** With the pressures to be the best, it's easy for young athletes to fall into the trap of overtraining. During the off-season, emphasize quality workouts over quantity, allowing the body to recover fully between sessions.
- 3 Prioritize Sleep:** Adequate sleep is essential for physical and mental recovery. A consistent [sleep](#) schedule and a relaxing bedtime routine can enhance sleep quality.
- 4 Explore New Activities:** Variety is the key to preventing burnout. Use your off-season to experiment with alternative forms of exercise or relaxation, from racquet sports to meditation, to keep things exciting and enjoyable.
- 5 Address Lingering Injuries:** Pain is not a badge of honor; it's a signal that something needs attention. Seeking guidance from a physical therapist or healthcare provider can prevent [minor issues](#) from becoming major setbacks.

As the Official Injury-Prevention Partner of the Massachusetts Youth Soccer Association, Bay State Physical Therapy is always here when you need us. [Download our Injury Prevention Guide.](#)



PARTNERING WITH YOU FOR YEAR-ROUND SUCCESS

By approaching the off-season with intention and purpose, young athletes can set themselves up for success in the seasons to come. Whether it's focusing on recovery, incorporating strength training, or exploring new activities, the off-season is a valuable time for growth and development.

At [Bay State Physical Therapy](#), we understand your passion for sports. By recognizing the importance of off-season training in preventing injuries and unnecessary sports burnout, you and your team will be on your road to long-term athletic success. Need guidance? Call your [nearest Bay State Physical Therapy location](#) or [click here to request an evaluation](#).

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Have something you'd like to learn more about in an upcoming newsletter?

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