

[IMAGE]

Dancing Your Way to Knee Pain

Back and forth, around and around, to the left, to the right, then back again. The repetitive movements of dance can contribute to any number of injuries, including tendinitis and stress fractures. Although ballet is considered one of the more graceful and delicate types of dance, ballet movements and positions can place particular stress on the foot, ankle and knee.

A survey of 22 ballet dancers (16 women and 6 men; average age of 30 years) examined the relationship between ballet and the incidence of knee injury. All but one of the 22 dancers reported experiencing some type of knee injury during their ballet training and career, with injuries occurring most frequently to the front of the knee.

The survey also revealed that only eight of the 21 dancers who reported a knee injury had practiced any specific preventive exercises (i.e., stretching, strengthening, etc.); following their injuries, almost all of the injured dancers began to incorporate such exercises into their regular routines.

So get out on that floor and move to the rhythm! But before you do, consider the potential for injury, especially if ballet is your dance of choice. Don't wait until after you get hurt to decide to adopt preventive exercises.

Reference:

Credico M, Davis A. Knee injury in ballet dancers: incidence and the effect of preventive exercises. *Journal of Sports Chiropractic & Rehabilitation*, June 1999: Vol. 13, No. 2, pp43-49.

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