



Youth Injury Prevention Program

Designed for athletes ages 7-12

Young Athlete Center

Children's
HOSPITAL • ST. LOUIS
BJC HealthCare

 **Washington**[®]
University in St. Louis

Physicians

About Our Program

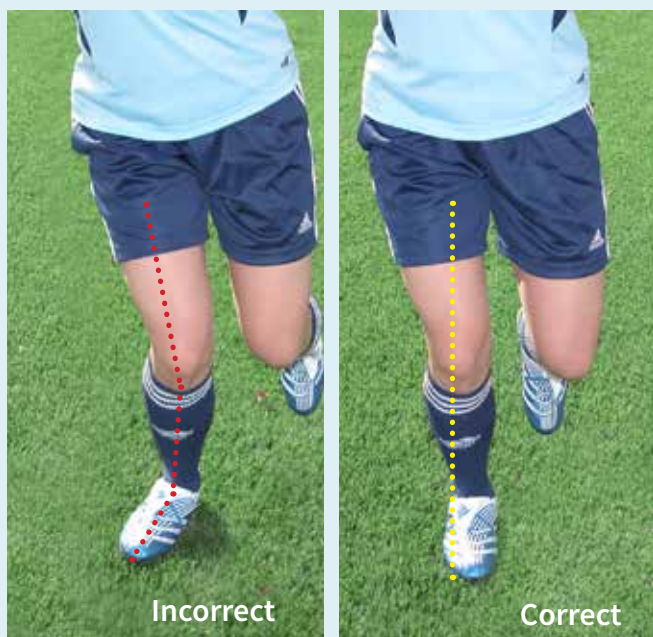


This Injury Prevention Program incorporates the best available scientific techniques to keep athletes safe on the field, utilizing the proven techniques from the FIFA 11+ Kids ACL Prevention Program. The dynamic FIFA 11+ Kids warm-up routine has been shown to decrease knee injuries, including ACL tears, hamstring strains, and ankle sprains, as well as improve athletic performance. This program was originally created for soccer, but can be modified for any sport, and will keep you at the cutting-edge of athlete safety.

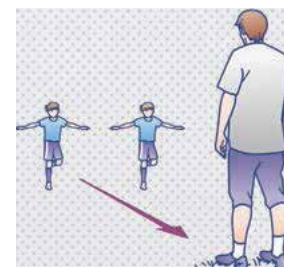
Body Position

A key point in the program is to use the proper technique during all of the exercises. Pay full attention to correct posture and good body control, including straight leg alignment, knee-over-toe position and soft landings.

The correct body position displays a straight leg alignment, with knee-over-toe position.



Level 1 Exercises



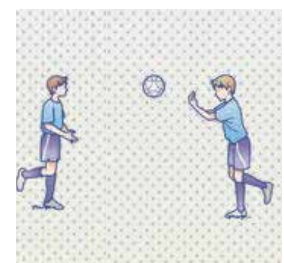
1. Alertness running game: listen for the stop command

Starting position: players stand on the goal line, 2 meters apart. Coach stands just outside penalty area (distance depends on age of the player). **Action:** at the coaches command, players run straight ahead towards the coach. If the coach calls “right” or “left”, the players must stand on the right or left leg and maintain balance for around 3 seconds. They can hop until they find their balance. The knee of the supporting leg should not be fully extended, and the arms can be used for balance. If the player does not stand on one leg at the stop command or the other foot touches the ground within 3 seconds, he/she must jog back to the goal line. The coach then gives the command to run and stop. All players then jog back to the goal line. **3 sets with 5 stop commands per set.**



2. Skating jumps: learning how to land

Starting position: players stand on the goal line, about 2 meters apart. Coach tells the players which leg to stand on and makes sure that every player is standing on the correct leg. **Action:** at the coach’s command (“jump!”), the players jump forward on one leg and land on the other leg. The coach indicates the direction in order to avoid collisions. **2 sets of 10 jumps, 5 per leg.**



3. Single-leg stance: throwing the ball

Starting position: 2 players stand on one leg at 3-5 metres opposite each other. **Action:** the players take it in turns to throw a ball to each other. The distance between them should be reduced to begin with and a simple throwing technique used. Alternative types of throwing (both hands, one hand, hard throw, etc.) can be incorporated later. **1 set on each leg, 5 throws per player.**



4. Press-ups: tunnel

Starting position: one player stands while the other players are in press-up position close to each other to form a tunnel, hands and feet hip-width apart. **Action:** the standing player rolls a ball down the tunnel and then goes to the start of the tunnel and assumes the press-up position. After the ball has rolled through, the last player in the tunnel takes it and runs to the start of the tunnel, rolls the ball through and goes to the start of the tunnel in the press-up position. The exercise can be turned into a competition between two groups. **2 sets, with each child rolling the ball once.** Maximum of 8 players per group.



5. Single-leg jumps: forwards

Starting position: players stand on one leg on the goal line with clear space between them, i.e. about 2 meters apart. **Action:** at the coach’s command, the players jump forward on one leg, landing on the same leg. The jumps should be as long as possible. Players should stand still for around 3 seconds after landing. After a complete set (10 jumps in total), the players walk slowly back to the goal line. **2 sets of 5 jumps on one leg and 5 on the other.**



6. Spiderman: stroking the ball

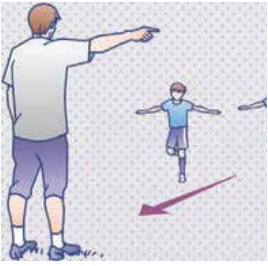
Starting position: players support themselves on their hands and feet, hip-width apart, the back pointing towards the ground. The body should be in as straight a line as possible from the head to the knees. The ball is directly in front of the feet. **Action:** players lift one leg, touch the ball with one foot and roll it gently forwards and then backwards. They repeat the exercise with the other leg and then alternate the movement with each leg. The movement should be slow and deliberate. **3 sets of 15 seconds each.**



7. Sideways roll: squatting position

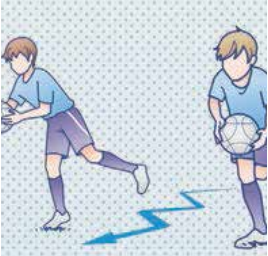
Starting position: the players squat, about 2 metres apart. **Action:** the players put both hands on the ground in front of their knees. They then lower their heads so that the chin is nearly touching the chest and roll over diagonally on their arm, shoulder and back. **5 rolls per side.**

Level 2 Exercises



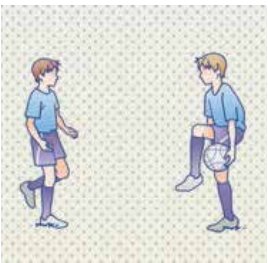
1. Alertness running game: watch for the stop command

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that the players watch the coach for the stop command. The coach indicates the leg on which they should stop. **3 sets with 5 stop commands per set.**



2. Skating jumps: ball in both hands

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that the players hold a ball with both hands. **2 sets of 10 jumps, 5 per leg.**



3. Single-leg stance: throwing the ball and moving it around the free leg

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that after the ball is thrown, the player moves it around the raised free leg. **1 set on each leg, 5 throws per player.**



4. Press-ups: forearm support; shin resting on ball

Starting position: players lie with their forearms flat on the ground and the ball under the middle of their shins, head facing the ground. The body should be in a straight line from head to foot. **Action:** players move themselves forward until the ball lightly touches the feet and then back until the ball is almost under the knees. The movements should be slow and deliberate. The forearms stay in the same place and the legs should always be on the ball. **3 sets of 15 seconds each.**



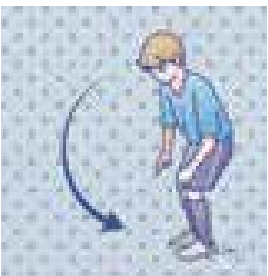
5. Single-leg jumps: back and forth

Starting position: players stand on one leg about 2 meters in front of the goal line with clear space between them, i.e. about 2 metres apart. **Action:** as level 1, except that the coach indicates whether to jump forwards or backwards. **2 sets of 5 jumps on one leg and 5 on the other.**



6. Spiderman: a proper stretch

Starting position: as level 1. **Action:** players move backwards with their hands extended and then return to the starting position. Players then move with their feet forwards until the body is fully stretched and back again. The players perform the exercise slowly and in a controlled manner, alternating the movements. **3 sets of 15 seconds each.**



7. Sideways roll: slowly from a standing position

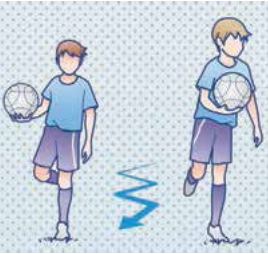
Starting position: the players are standing straight, about 2 metres apart. **Action:** the rolls learned in level 1 are now performed from a standing position. The players squat by bending their knees, looking downwards and moving the chin towards the chest. The hand movement should be slow and deliberate, so that the players can master the process. The roll movement is the same as for level 1. **5 rolls per side.**

Level 3 Exercises



1. Alertness running game: ball in the hands and listen for the stop command

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that the players hold a ball with both hands. **3 sets with 5 stop commands per set.**



2. Skating jumps: balancing with the ball in one hand

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that the players balance with the ball on an outstretched hand (one set with the right hand and one with the left). **2 sets of 10 jumps, 5 per leg.**



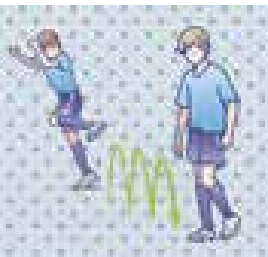
3. Single-leg stance: passing game

Starting position: 2 players stand on one leg at 2-5 meters opposite each other. **Action:** players pass the ball to each other along the ground with the instep, stopping the ball before returning the pass. Passes should be as accurate as possible so that the players can stay in position. Pass variations can be added later. **1 set on each leg, 5 passes per player.**



4. Press-ups: rolling the ball around the hands

Starting position: players are in the press-up position, with a ball in front of each player. **Action:** players lift a hand from the ground and roll the ball around the other hand that is still on the ground. They then swap hands to repeat the exercise, thus making a figure eight with the ball. **3 sets of 15 seconds each.**



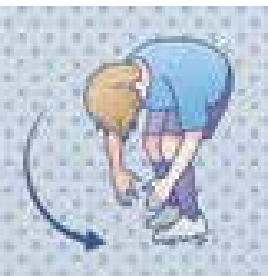
5. Single-leg jumps: sideways

Starting position and action: as level 2, except that the players jump sideways. The coach indicates the direction, and constantly watches to ensure that no collisions occur due to players being too close to each other. **2 sets of 5 jumps on one leg and 5 on the other.**



6. Spiderman: the crab

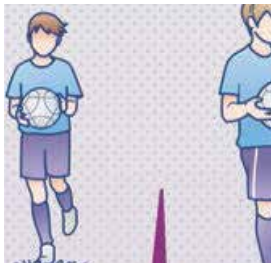
Starting position: as level 1. **Action:** the players move forward on all fours (feet at the front) towards the coach. **3 sets (5-10 metres, depending on ability).**



7. Sideways roll: dynamically from a standing position

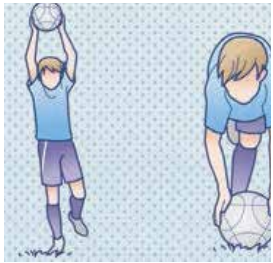
Starting position: as level 2. **Action:** the squatting posture adopted in level 2 is now performed more quickly and dynamically and the roll learned in level 1 is introduced dynamically. **5 rolls per side.**

Level 4 Exercises



1. Alertness running game: ball in the hands and watch for the stop command

Starting position and action: as level 2, except that the players hold a ball with both hands. **3 sets with 5 stop commands per set.**



2. Skating jumps: dropping the ball onto the ground

Starting position and action: as level 2, except that on landing, the players stretch while standing on one leg and, with the ball above their heads, bend over forwards, drop the ball gently onto the ground and then assume the upright position again. This should be done slowly and in a controlled manner. **2 sets of 10 jumps, 5 per leg.**



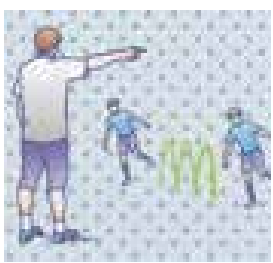
3. Single-leg stance: throwing the ball and passing back without touching the ground

Starting position: as level 3. **Action:** player throws the ball to their partner so that the latter can pass back with the foot. The pass should be volleyed (i.e. without the ball touching the ground first) and be played as accurately as possible so that the player who threw the ball can catch it. The partner must also throw the ball accurately for the volleyed pass to be accurate. Hopping is permitted to find balance. **1 set on each leg, 5 throws per player.**



4. Press-ups: rolling the ball between hands and feet

Starting position: as level 3. **Action:** the players roll the ball with the left hand under the body to the left foot and then pass the ball with the same foot to the right hand. Repeat the exercise starting with the right hand (to the right foot and then up to the left hand), thus switching sides. **3 sets of 15 seconds each.**



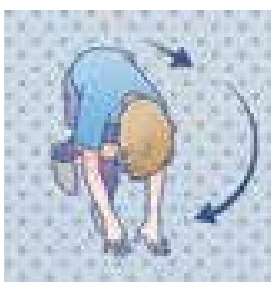
5. Single-leg jumps: the coach indicates the direction

Starting position and action: as level 2, except that the players jump in the direction indicated by the coach (forwards, backwards, left and right). The coach gives the command (“Jump!”) while indicating the direction, to avoid collisions. Ensure that there is sufficient space between the players! **2 sets of 5 jumps on one leg and 5 on the other.**



6. Spiderman: dribbling

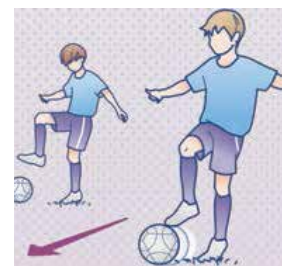
Starting position and action: similar to level 3, except that the players “dribble” with a ball, which is guided in a controlled manner. **3 sets (5-10 meters, depending on ability).**



7. Sideways roll: from a slow walk

Starting position: it is important that the players are able to safely execute the fast rolls that they learned in level 3 from a standing position. **Action:** the squatting and rolling actions learned in level 3 are now introduced from a slow walk. **5 rolls per side.**

Level 5 Exercises



1. Alertness running game: dribble with the ball and listen for the stop command

Starting position and action: as level 1, except that the players dribble with the ball. At the stop command, the players stop the ball with the foot and stand on one leg without touching the ball with the free foot. **3 sets with 5 stop commands per set.**



2. Skating jumps: dynamic balancing with ball

Starting position and action: as level 4, except that the players stretch their free leg behind them upwards and both arms forwards and then return to the usual one-leg position. This is followed by the next jump. The players make as long a stretch as possible, the idea being for the ball, head, torso and raised leg to be in one straight line (parallel to the ground). **2 sets of 10 jumps, 5 per leg.**



3. Single-leg stance: testing the partner's balance

Starting position: two players stand on one leg opposite each other, within arm's reach. Both hold a ball in both hands in front of each other. **Action:** players push the balls against each other at chest height and try to push each other off balance. When one player touches the ground with the raised foot, the game begins again. The players can hop to regain balance. No hitting movements should be made; the balls must always be touching each other. The coach chooses the exercise partners according to size and dexterity. The exercise can be turned into a competition by awarding a point to the player who sends their partner off balance. **1 set on each leg for 20 seconds each.**



4. Press-ups: hands on the ball

Starting position: similar to level 3, except that the players support themselves by placing both hands on the ball. **Action:** the players move slowly backwards with the feet in small stages and then back to the starting position. The movements must be made calmly and in a controlled manner. If the grass is damp, switch to level 4. **3 sets of 10 seconds each.**



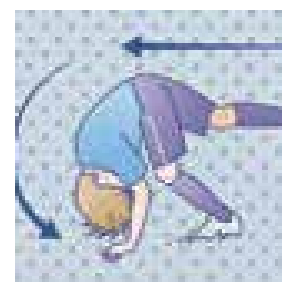
5. Single-leg jumps: the coach indicates the direction; ball in both hands

Starting position and exercise: as level 4, except that the players hold a ball in both hands. **2 sets of 5 jumps on one leg and 5 on the other.**



6. Spiderman: ball bearing

Starting position: as level 1, except that the players support themselves by placing their feet on the ball. **Action:** the players roll the ball under their feet and move forwards slowly and in a controlled manner. **3 sets (3-7 meters, depending on ability).**



7. Sideways roll: from a faster forward movement

Starting position: it is important that the players are able to safely execute the movement that they learned in level 4 in both directions. Only then should level 5 be attempted. **Action:** similar to level 4, except from a more fast-forward movement (quick walking or jogging). **5 rolls per side.**

Young Athlete Center



St. Louis Children's Hospital | St. Louis Children's Hospital Specialty Care Center

Young Athlete Center 24-hour Injury Hotline: 314.273.9200

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