

Maybe it's time to get in the game

August 17 2018, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—Team sports aren't just for kids. They offer adults a wealth of benefits, including a greater feeling of well-being, reduced stress and a strong sense of community.

You have many options for finding an adult club or team-based sport in your area. Your local park and rec department or "Y" might sponsor such activities. The World Adult Kickball Association has expanded to provide adult leagues in a variety of sports from softball to soccer—learn more at kickball.com.

If your child is on a team that's coached by an outside professional, that coach may know of adult sports teams looking for new members.

But just as you wouldn't send a child out onto a playing field without some prep steps, you don't want to join a pickup game of basketball or sign up for a soccer league without taking some precautions.

Stay sports safe:

- Get a "pre-season" physical.
- Stay strong and flexible with regular strength training and stretching.
- Warm up and cool down properly.
- Always wear protective gear and make sure needed equipment is in good condition.
- Make sure the field/court is in good condition.
- Avoid playing outdoors in bad weather to minimize injury risk.
- Hydrate as needed during play when you feel thirsty.
- Don't play through pain—see your health-care provider or an orthopedist if you get injured.

Most sports injuries stem from a lack of education and awareness about safety, wearing the wrong equipment, and being out of condition. So bone up on the ins and outs of your sport and get a checkup—a sports physical—if you're out of shape.

On game days, make sure that everyone follows safety rules. Know that some medications, like allergy or cold remedies, can dehydrate you, and adjust your water intake as needed. Also, take breaks to prevent [overuse injuries](#).

Now, what are you waiting for? Get off the couch and into the game!

More information: Play it safe with these tips on [sports safety](#) from the University of Rochester Medical Center.

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