

PRESS RELEASE

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Date: October 6, 2010

Focus on Ski Conditioning to Prevent Injury at ONS Foundation Seminar

GREENWICH, CT – “Don’t wait for the snow to start falling to prepare your body for the ski season,” says orthopedic surgeon Dr. Steven Hindman of the ONS Foundation for Clinical Research and Education. “The sooner you start a conditioning program, the better.” As further impetus, the ONS Foundation is holding its annual **Ski Conditioning and Injury Prevention Seminar on Tuesday, December 7 at 6:30 p.m.** at ONS building, 6 Greenwich Office Park at 10 Valley Drive. Dr. Hindman and orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine specialist Dr. Tim Greene will discuss the causes of common skiing injuries and how they may be avoided. The free seminar will include tips on safe skiing, and information on the latest treatments for common injuries such as a ruptured ACL. **Chalon Lefebvre, PT** of ONS Physical Therapy will talk about and demonstrate ski conditioning and strengthening exercises. Registration is requested. Call 203-869-3131 or email contact@ons-foundation.org to register or for information.

Each year eager skiers and snowboarders head to the slopes but many do little to prepare for the physical demands of their sport. Even the best of athletes are susceptible to injury when under-prepared muscles engage in winter sports activity for the first time in many months. Physical conditioning can make all the difference.

According to Dr. Hindman, there is a lot that can be done to avoid the common aches and more serious strains to joints and muscles that many experience. “Most people go from their car to the ski lift without even a single stretch,” says Hindman. “Skiing requires muscles and muscle groups that are used very little the rest of the year. Ideally, strengthening and conditioning should begin two to three months before the first trip up the mountain, but it’s never too late to benefit from a program. Find one that’s geared to winter mountain sports. If you don’t prepare, your risk for injury increases.”

The injury most feared by skiers is a torn ACL, (anterior cruciate ligament.) One of four ligaments in the knee, the ACL can tear when a skier tries to recover from a fall in which his weight drops backward over the ski tails, triggering the skis to shoot forward putting excessive stress on the ACL. The injury usually requires surgery and a lengthy recuperation. Conditioning can play an important role in ACL injury prevention. Strengthening both the upper and lower leg muscles will help stabilize the knee during stress situations.

Ski conditioning should consist of building muscular endurance and increasing strength to maintain good balance and resist fatigue throughout an active day. The major leg muscles work the hardest when skiing or snowboarding. Exercises should focus on strengthening hips, thighs, hamstrings and calves, while improving flexibility and stamina. Yoga, which develops strength, flexibility, balance and breathing, works well for many people. Pilates, a deep muscle exercise system, can improve core body strength and flexibility.

Fatigue however, is the most common cause of skiing and snowboarding accidents. "Most injuries happen after 2 p.m. in the afternoon due to muscle fatigue, flat light and deteriorating snow conditions. When you get tired, it's time to stop and go inside," recommends Dr. Hindman.

The ONS Foundation health and injury prevention seminars are presented by physicians and physical therapists as part of the organization's education initiative. For more information, visit www.ons-foundation.org.

ONS Foundation for Clinical Research and Education, Inc. is a registered not-for-profit, 501(c)3 organization devoted to understanding the causes and optimal treatments of orthopaedic injuries and musculoskeletal conditions. The ONS Foundation, in alliance with Greenwich Hospital, strives to improve standards of excellence for the treatment of musculoskeletal disorders through clinical research, physician and patient education, and community outreach programs. The Foundation is located at 6 Greenwich Office Park, 10 Valley Drive, Greenwich, CT.

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