CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINERS (ATCs)
ATCs provide initial injury evaluation and treatment on the athletic field or in the training room. More severe injuries or cases that are unresponsive to routine treatment are referred to the team physician for work-up to ensure the student-athlete is returned to play as soon as physically able.

TEAM PHYSICIAN/PROGRAM DIRECTOR
Keith E. Penney, MD, a board certified orthopedic surgeon who is specialty-trained in sports medicine, provides continuous oversight to the program and is the team physician for participating high schools. Care is provided through his office via ATC or direct patient referral as needed.

PHYSICAL THERAPY
Integrated rehabilitative services are provided to speed recovery and minimize time spent off the field and out of the game. There is a direct line of communication between Dr. Penney and the therapists to ensure optimal results for each injury.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT PROGRAM
Implementation of pre and post-concussion neuropsychological computer testing with comprehensive follow-up and clearance criteria to ensure the safe return of the student-athlete back to competition.

DIAGNOSTIC IMAGING
State of the art imaging services are available both at the hospital and the off-site imaging facility on Kennedy Drive to provide the most accurate diagnosis possible with the least possible delay.

EMERGENT CARE SERVICES
Multiple urgent and emergent care facilities conveniently located throughout the greater Torrington area that are available for more serious injuries as part of the larger Charlotte Hungerford medical network.

For More Information Call... (860) 496-6669
WHAT IS A SPRAIN?
A sprain is a stretching or tearing injury to a ligament. A ligament is tissue that connects bone to bone. One or more ligament can be injured during a sprain.

WHAT CAUSES A SPRAIN?
A sprain can result from a sudden twist, stepping on a uneven surface or from a fall that forces the joint out of its normal position.

WHERE DO SPRAINS USUALLY OCCUR?
Sprains can occur in both upper and lower parts of the body, but the most common site is the ankle. Ankle sprains are the most common injury in the United States.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A SPRAIN:
The usual signs and symptoms include swelling, pain, loss of motion, and bruising. Some people may feel a pop or tear when the injury occurs.

INITIAL TREATMENT:
For sprains and strains, use the acronym R.I.C.E. (Rest, Ice, Compression, and Elevation). This will help control the swelling and pain that occurs from sprains and strains.

WHAT IS A STRAIN?
A strain is an injury to either a muscle or a tendon, the tissue that connects muscles to bones. Depending on the severity of the injury, a strain may be a simple overstretch of the muscle or tendon, or it can result in a partial or complete tear.

WHAT CAUSES A STRAIN?
A strain is caused by twisting or pulling a muscle or tendon. Strains can be acute or chronic. An acute strain is caused by trauma or an injury such as a blow to the body; it can also be caused by improperly lifting heavy objects or overstressing the muscles. Chronic strains are usually the result of overuse - prolonged, repetitive movement of the muscles and tendons.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF STRAINS:
Typically, people with a strain experience pain, muscle spasm and muscle weakness. They can also have localized swelling, cramping, or inflammation and, with a more severe strain, some loss of muscle function. Patients typically have pain in the injured area and general weakness of the muscle when they attempt to move it. Severe strains that partially or completely tear the muscle or tendon are often very painful and disabling.

INJURY SEVERITY:
Strains and Sprains are categorized in a similar manner:

Grade I: This is a mild soft tissue injury and only some of the fibers have been damaged. Healing occurs within two to three weeks.

Grade II: This is a moderate soft tissue injury with more extensive damage to fibers, but the ligament or tendon is not completely ruptured. Healing occurs within three to six weeks.

Grade III: This is a severe injury with a complete rupture of the fibers. This typically requires a surgical repair of the tissue. The healing period can be up to three months.

WHEN TO SEE A DOCTOR FOR A SPRAIN OR STRAIN
• You have severe pain and cannot put weight on or use the injured joint.
• The area over the injured joint or next to it is very tender when you touch it.
• The injured area looks crooked or has lumps and bumps that you do not see on the uninjured joint.
• You cannot move the injured joint.
• You cannot walk more than a few steps without significant pain.
• Your limb buckles or gives way when you try to use the joint.
• You have numbness in any part of the injured area.
• You see redness or red streaks spreading out from the injury.
• You injure an area that has been injured several times before.
• You have pain, swelling, or redness over a bony part of your foot.
WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?
A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?
Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians
If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

• Appears dazed or stunned
• Is confused about assignment or position
• Forgets an instruction
• Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
• Moves clumsily
• Answers questions slowly
• Loses consciousness (even briefly)
• Shows behavior or personality changes
• Can’t recall events prior to hit or fall
• Can’t recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete
• Headache or “pressure” in head
• Nausea or vomiting
• Balance problems or dizziness
• Double or blurry vision
• Sensitivity to light
• Sensitivity to noise
• Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
• Concentration or memory problems
• Confusion
• Does not “feel right”

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?
Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

• Ensure that they follow their coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
• Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
• Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly. Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?
1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don’t let your child return to play until a health care professional says it’s OK. Children who return to play too soon while the brain is still healing risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. Tell your child’s coach about any recent concussion. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child’s coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.