**ACL Injury Prevention Exercises**

*Most ACL tears occur during non-contact activities—pivoting, landing, cutting and sudden deceleration. A research-based injury prevention program that teaches athletes to correctly perform these movements, warm up properly and strengthen the knees, surrounding muscles and core can help significantly reduce risk of an ACL injury. Listed below are some exercises to get you started. Always perform these exercises with proper technique and avoid rushing through them.*

**Bodyweight Squat**

Stand with your feet shoulder-width apart. Place your hands together in front of you. Sit back pushing your hips backwards and slowly bend down into a squat until your thighs are parallel to the ground. The knees do not go over toes.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=57zcrnrhyVc

**Forward Lunges**

Start with your legs shoulder-width apart. Next, step forward with one leg and lower your body by bending both knees, making sure your front knee is above your ankle. Return to starting position by pushing off your front leg. Repeat both sides.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=i4x7-x_RlyE

**Donkey Kicks**

Start on hands and knees with hands positioned under shoulders, knees under hips and back straight. Tighten core and kick one leg out behind while keeping it bent, hold for a second and return to starting position. Switch legs.


**Lateral Shuffle**

Set out cones approximately 5 yards apart, stand at the far left cone in an athletic-ready position: feet hip-width apart, knees bent with your weight back in your flexed hips. The emphasis of this drill should be on rapid, quick foot actions for the sideways (lateral) shuffling.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=h4z1nyb1hS0

**Two-Foot Hops (forward-backward and side-to-side)**

Place a series of cones 18–24 inches apart in a straight line and stand 3–6 inches to the left of the first cone with your feet hip-width apart or closer; arms by your sides. With ONLY a very brief pause at the bottom of your downward phase, explode up through your lower body, fully extending your hips, knees and ankles, and jumping over the top of the cone. As you jump into the air, try to keep your feet level with each other and parallel with the floor.

**Squat Jumps**

Stand with your feet hip-width apart, arms by your sides. Engage your core muscles to brace your back. With ONLY a very brief pause at the bottom of your downward phase, explode up through your lower body, fully extending your hips, knees and ankles. As your jump into the air, try to keep your feet level with each other and parallel with the floor. Try to land softly and quietly, and push hips back and down to absorb the impact of landing. Do not lock out your knees on your landing.