| The Injury | The Problem | The Solution |
|---|---|---|
| **Lead Shoulder** | • Keeping left arm too tight to the chest and straight during backswing and impact – overloads the joint with impact forces causing labral (cartilage) tears<br>• In backswing and follow through rotation from shoulders causes impingement and damage to AC (acromioclavicular) joint<br>• Rotator cuff muscle strain or tear when overloading them to power the swing | • Keep arms loose and relaxed slightly forward/away from body<br>• Rotation comes from thoracic spine (upper body) NOT from shoulders<br>• Turn more with upper body, swing less with arms. Arms should 'follow' upper body rotation, not lead the rotation<br>• Improve upper spine (thoracic) mobility and shoulder joint flexibility through exercise<br>• Power from the body, not the shoulder or arm muscles |
| **Lead Knee** | • As you shift weight forward onto your left knee for swing through, all torque (rotational forces) and compression forces focused on inside of left knee<br>• Golfers often square the foot and lock knees – this increases shear forces on the knee, causing ligament strain and meniscus (cartilage) damage | • The knee should shift in front of the hip very early on in the downswing<br>• Avoid having hips slide past the knee towards the target as this increases knee stress<br>• Focus on hips and pelvis rotating rather than sliding<br>• Line of left thigh should be vertical or leaning away from target on downswing<br>• Maintain a soft squat at the knees approximately 25° flexed<br>• Angle the left foot 20 or 30° outwards towards the target at address to promote hip rotation rather than sliding off loading the knee |
| **Lower Back** | • Power swing focuses on rotation of pelvis through swing<br>• Torque (rotational force) created through the pelvis and lumbar spine can overload and strain muscles, ligaments and tendons of lower back<br>• Control and conditioning of lower back critical for injury prevention<br>• Shearing effect can damage vertebral discs<br>• Avoid 'popping' after impact, arching your back overloads your spine | • Power swing requires separation between rotation of the pelvis and trunk – greater separation means greater speed - this requires immense core strength and control to avoid injury<br>• Back strengthening exercises for core, pelvis, hamstring and glute muscles are crucial, as well as hip mobility exercises<br>• At address, hinge at the pelvis DON'T flex (slump) the lower back, this will increase load on your back<br>• Hips and spine must extend (straighten) together during the follow through<br>• Reduce injury risk by turning in unison – the hips and shoulders turn together on backswing and follow through – you sacrifice power but may save your back! |

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