

ON THE PODIUM

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How a Soccer Injury Sparked a Career in Sports Surgery

Dr. Loiy Alkhatib

What initially drew you to specialise in sports injuries and orthopaedic surgery, and how did your early experiences shape that journey?

I was always active in sports. When I injured my hand playing soccer, I saw how much an orthopaedic surgeon can change someone's life. That experience pushed me to this field and shaped my path.

Can you share a particularly challenging or defining case that changed your approach to patient care or surgical technique?

One young athlete had a complex shoulder instability. It was tough surgery and recovery was long. It reminded me of my own injury journey, patience, honesty, and teamwork make the difference.

Which recent advances in sports medicine such as biologics, arthroscopic technologies, or rehab protocols are you most excited about and actively integrating into your practice?

I like biologics and new arthroscopic tools. They help us heal tissues better and faster. I try to use them when there is good science behind.

How do you manage patient expectations around return-to-play timelines, especially when treating professional or high-level recreational athletes?

I tell athletes healing takes time. I explain average timelines, but also that every body heals different. Like my own hand injury - return needs patience.



How do you approach building and leading a multidisciplinary team such as physiotherapists and performance coaches to optimise recovery and outcomes?

I always include physios and coaches. Just like I needed support after my injury, patients need the full team to return safe and strong.

Are you involved in teaching or mentoring junior surgeons or trainees, and what do you emphasise most when passing on practical sports-medicine skills?

Yes, I teach juniors. I stress basics, tissue respect, and communication. I tell them: 'I became a surgeon because another surgeon fixed me' - never forget the human side.'

What research projects or collaborations are you currently working on, and how do you see them impacting clinical practice in the near future?

I am working on rotator cuff healing and cartilage repair. These projects can improve how we treat athletes and young patients like I once was.



With the rapid pace of new techniques and devices, how do you balance adopting novel solutions with ensuring patient safety and evidence-based care?

I don't adopt something just because it is new. I check evidence first. Safety comes before excitement.

Can you describe a time you faced a complication or slower-than-expected recovery, and how you handled it both personally and professionally?

Sometimes recovery is slow, like stiff shoulder after surgery. I always think of my own rehab days, clear talk and teamwork with physio make it easier for the patient.

What trends do you see shaping the next 5 to 10 years in sports orthopaedics, and how do you plan to evolve your practice in response?

I see biologics, less invasive surgery, smarter rehab, and AI support in decision-making. I want to grow with these changes and always remember why I started - my own injury story.



Dr. Loiy Alkhatib

Dr. Alkhatib graduated from Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) and George Washington University Hospital (GWUH) in 2009.

He completed his training in Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery in Germany and was awarded the German Board of Orthopedics and Trauma Surgery (Facharzt). Mr. Alkhatib is a certified Orthopedic surgeon in the United Kingdom (UK), holding the GMC/reg. number (7260292), as well as ECFMG certificate (07247543).

Dr. Alkhatib completed an Upper Extremity Reconstruction and Sports Medicine Fellowship at University of Manitoba in Canada. Moreover, he completed an Orthopedic Trauma fellowship at the same university.

He completed a shoulder and elbow surgery fellowship at University College of London Hospital (UCLH). He was a visiting physician at Shoulder and Elbow Surgery Unit at Holy Cross Hospital in Florida, and at Sports Medicine Surgery Clinic at NY-Langone (Hospital for Joint Diseases) in New York, USA. He completed an AIOD Trauma/Upper limb Reconstruction Fellowship in Edinburgh, Scotland.

He also completed an AO Trauma Fellowship at Coventry University Hospital, second largest trauma center in UK. Alkhatib was appointed as an Orthopedic and Trauma Surgery Consultant at Klinikum Bad Hersfeld, and St. Marianen Hospital in Germany. Currently, he is working as Orthopedic surgeon and sports medicine consultant at Dr. Suleiman Al Habib Hospital, Dubai. The scope of his work includes evidence-based treatment of upper limb trauma, sports injuries and degenerative conditions of the upper and lower limbs.

Dr. Alkhatib has an interest in postgraduate education and has been selected to participate as an instructor in AO Trauma courses, as well as courses held by Arthrex for Shoulder and Elbow, and knee reconstruction. In his spare time Alkhatib enjoys travelling and karting.



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