

CHIROPRACTIC IN SPORTS

Whether you are a weekend or a professional athlete, there are two things that all athletes have in common. Both want to do their best and both can get injured. Athletes may ask themselves why they get injured, even if they stretch properly and train regularly to maintain good shape. The simple answer is that in most cases athletes play too hard, too long, or too fast. Injuries can be minimized, but they cannot be totally avoided. Many athletes are sidelined with minor injuries that could have been avoided. Some sit out because their injury did not respond to ordinary treatment, while others play at less than peak efficiency, simply because their musculoskeletal system is not balanced. The way in which you treat the injuries determines how fast you recover and how quickly you can get back to the activity. Coaches, athletes and doctors are realizing that pain-killing drugs are not the answer. They merely cover up the symptoms, deceiving the athlete into actions, which could make the injury worse.

What can be done to get an athlete back on the field as soon as possible once he got injured? Rest is usually suggested, but may take a long time. The chiropractic approach to health probably most closely relates to the needs of the sport participant. Most sports involve body contact, fast starts and stops, positioning and postures that place an unusual strain on the musculoskeletal system. Chiropractors pay special attention to the spine and joints by using the chiropractic adjustment to return spinal segments and/or involved joints to their normal mobility, and by using physical therapy to help the supportive tissues (muscles, tendons, & ligaments) return to their normal function. Combined with some rest to help the healing process, athletes will find their way back onto the court or field in due time. Afterwards better strategies for exercise, stretching routines and nutritional advice will be discussed with the athlete to assist him to remain injury-free.

It is essential to have an injury properly evaluated to assess the amount of damage. Most injuries can recover fully, although they do need knowledgeable treatment during the various stages of healing. If not carefully monitored and treated, a sprain or strain injury can result in long-lasting joint instability, painful or weak joints and muscles, and lack of mobility. A chiropractor that is trained in the treatment of sports injuries can give expert advice and offer management you'll need to insure that your injury will recover efficiently.

The advantage of Chiropractic is not only drug-free and surgical-free care, but also preventative and performance enhancing care. Maintaining proper alignment and biomechanical functionality will allow athletes to be optimally prepared for their sport. Many of the greatest athletes in the world are consulting chiropractors before a competition or event as a "tune-up" in an effort to place their bodies in a state of peak efficiency. Following the competition or event, they are again treated to enhance the recuperative process after the stress of their particular event. Many world class and Olympic athletes, Super 14 and Currie Cup teams as well as professional stars (Tiger Woods, Lance Armstrong, Andy Roddick, Carlos Moya, Arnold Schwarzeneger etc.), have consulted sports chiropractors to provide regular care and proclaimed the benefits that chiropractic has meant for their careers.

Chiropractors have been selected as attending physicians at the Olympic Games, Commonwealth



Games, World Championships in track and field, cycling, volleyball, power-lifting, aerobics, and triathlons and many other international and national sport events. More and more professional sport teams, university and school teams are utilizing chiropractors for the same reasons. The number of professional athletes utilizing chiropractic care is growing steadily, as they realize the benefit to maximize athletic performance.