

# Sports physiotherapy: A revolution for the athletes

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Received date: February 15, 2024

Accepted date: February 20, 2024

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Citation: Koley S. Sports physiotherapy: A revolution for the athletes. J Rehabil Res Pract. 2024;5(1):1-3.

## Editorial

Sports have reached, now-a-days, up to the highest levels of professionalism, thus are more physically and psychologically demanding. Sports injuries are now quite widespread too. These injuries can reduce the athletes' performance and keep them away from reaching their fullest potential. Sports medicine, a discipline of modern medicine deals with physical fitness as well as the diagnosis, treatment, and prevention of sports injuries. Physiotherapists are the crucial members of the sports medicine team for the healing of sports injuries. Though the science of physiotherapy is believed to have been practiced as early as 400 BC by Hippocrates and Galen as they advocated manual therapy techniques, massage, and hydrotherapy methods in treating their patients, the worldwide popularity of physiotherapy practice is quite recent. The process involves the use of mechanical movements and forces to remediate impairments and help to promote function, mobility, and quality of life.

Sports physiotherapy is an important branch of physiotherapy. For sports physiotherapists, a strong athlete-therapist relationship is essential for efficient treatment and establishing athletes' expectations for injury recovery. Therefore, it is crucial to consider the expectations of the injured athletes while creating a rehabilitation program [1].

Despite the increased understanding of injury processes, prevention strategies, and load monitoring techniques in athletes over the past 20 years, epidemiological studies have not found a statistically significant decline in sports-related injuries [2]. Sports physiotherapists have a crucial role in the management of sports injuries. In international and elite sports, a sports physiotherapist's primary responsibilities continue to be injury treatment and rehabilitation as well as performance enhancement through interventions for injury prevention, management, and recovery [3].

## The Role of Sports Physiotherapists

As sports physiotherapy has become a rising specialization [4], certain qualifications and requirements are connected to the many overlapping duties performed by sports physiologists [5]. The essential roles of the sports physiotherapists are:

### Treatment of sports-specific injuries

A sports physiotherapist must have effective skills for the treatment of injured athletes on the ground as well as in camps with the help of various physiotherapeutic treatment protocols [6].

### Injury prevention

Firstly, the risk of injury should be evaluated by the sports physiotherapists, and then they need to educate the preparing athletes so that there is a decrease in the incidence and recurrence of particular sports injuries. They also provide the athletes with a suitable warm-up workout before the game that helps to prevent injuries.

### Seeking acute intervention

Any disease or injury can be treated and managed effectively by sports physiotherapists applying

their knowledge and abilities to respond to an acute sickness or injury and thus, help an athlete to recover more quickly by regulating blood pressure, maintaining healthy cardiac function, and maintaining proper blood circulation [7].

### Rehabilitation of athletes

Through their clinical reasoning and therapeutic diagnoses for any ailments related to sports, the sports physiotherapists assist in the rehabilitation of athletes with specific rehabilitation protocols ensuring that the rehabilitating athletes would return to their game in minimum possible time [8].

### Performance enhancement

The performance of the athletes may increase manifolds with the help of applying regular physiotherapy training protocols. The use of physical therapy reduces muscle tension and improves the amount of oxygen reaching the tissues. Along with effective cell-to-cell communication, it also aids in optimal regulation and coordination. It also improves the athletes' agility and speed, which is a more dazzling achievement in their performances.

### Improvement of a healthy, active lifestyle

With regular physiotherapy exercises, the athletes are able to deal safe, healthy, and active lives. This makes them a champion in many other spheres and capable of engaging in a variety of physical activities [9].

### Enhancing professionalism and managerial competence

The athletes gain superior time management and resource management abilities through regular physiotherapy exercises. These fundamental abilities are developed by individuals through professional, social, and ethical disciplines [10].

### Living a disease-free life

Sports physiotherapy is a great method, enabling an athlete to stay fit, active and have a disease-free, healthy life. By following regular physical exercise protocols provided by the sports physiotherapists, the immunity of the athletes may increase manifolds.

## The International Federation of Sports Physical Therapy

The International Federation of Sports Physical Therapy (IFSPT) was founded on February 14, 1928, during the Olympic Winter Games in Switzerland with the following objectives:

- Promote sports physiotherapy worldwide.
- Advance the professional interest and stature of sports physiotherapy worldwide.
- Improve the quality of sports physiotherapy worldwide through improving knowledge, skills, and professional responsibility.
- Facilitate efforts to conduct research, to promote evidence-based sports physiotherapy.
- Encourage communication and exchange of educational and professional information through various mediums.
- Promote international harmonization in order to achieve the overall mission of the IFSPT.
- Carrying out the functions of World Physiotherapy as set forth by the bylaws and in policy statements as they relate to the IFSPT.
- Giving support to World Physiotherapy in events and matters where sports physiotherapy is involved.
- Developing, promoting, monitoring and updating high international core standards of sports physiotherapy by setting competencies and standards; developing clinical guidelines, protocols and a code of ethics; establishing a recognized body of knowledge; encouraging participation in evidence-based practice.
- Encouraging international scientific research and promoting opportunities for the spread of knowledge.
- Encouraging communication and exchange of information between member organizations and their members, students, teachers, and programs.
- Encouraging working visits between members of member organizations.
- Facilitating the development of international networks of all specialty areas in which sports physiotherapists practice.
- Developing a list of IFSPT registered sports physiotherapists.
- Facilitating job rotation.
- Promoting communication and cooperation with other health care professionals, organizations, agencies, and professional associations in areas of mutual interest.

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