A word about the American Medical Society for Sports Medicine

The American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) was organized in 1991 by a group of physicians who recognized the need for an organization within the field of Sports Medicine that addressed overall health and functional capacity as it relates to the whole patient, and the incorporation of an objectively verifiable knowledge base towards enhancement and preservation of function. The AMSSM was formed to provide a link between the rapidly expanding core of knowledge related to Sports Medicine and its application to patients in a clinical setting. The clinician best suited to practically establish that link is the Sports Medicine Physician. For more information, please call (913) 327-1415 or visit our web site at www.amssm.org. We’re dedicated to keeping patients healthy and active.

Sports Medicine Physicians are uniquely positioned to meet the demands of today’s health care environment.

American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
(913) 327-1415
www.amssm.org
Sports Medicine Physicians

From youth athletes and weekend warriors, to active people and elite athletes, Sports Medicine Physicians are an important player on any health team. They have significant specialized training in both the treatment and prevention of illness and injury to help patients maximize function, and minimize disability and time away from sports, work, or school.

Sports Medicine is recognized as a valid subspecialty by both the American Board of Medical Specialties and by Medicare (specialty code 23). Sports Medicine Physicians are physicians with a primary certification in Emergency Medicine, Family Medicine, Internal Medicine, Pediatrics, or Physical Medicine/Rehabilitation who obtain 1-2 years of additional training in Sports Medicine through an ACGME-approved fellowship program, successfully complete a subspecialty qualification examination in Sports Medicine and maintain requirements for ongoing certification. This rigorous process was instituted to distinguish certified Sports Medicine Physicians from other physicians without specialized training.

Expertise in musculoskeletal injury
Sports Medicine Physicians undergo extensive training in musculoskeletal medicine, and as a result are highly capable in the management of these problems. While orthopedic surgeons primarily specialize in the operative treatment of musculoskeletal injuries, Sports Medicine Physicians expertly focus on accurate diagnosis and on optimizing non-operative treatment of these injuries. This serves the great majority of the active population since approximately 90 percent of all musculoskeletal injuries are non-surgical. Common examples of musculoskeletal problems include acute ankle, knee and shoulder injuries; muscle strains; joint dislocations; and overuse injuries such as tendonitis and stress fractures. The majority of Sports Medicine Physicians are experienced in ultrasonography, a rapidly developing technology used for diagnostic as well as treatment of musculoskeletal injuries. Regenerative medicine (sometimes referred to as “biologics”) is also becoming a popular treatment option being utilized by the Sports Medicine Physician.

If surgery for an injury is required, Sports Medicine Physicians can expedite referral to the appropriate surgical specialty for intervention. They can also help guide referrals to appropriate rehabilitative care and ancillary services when necessary or even develop appropriate home rehabilitation programs for patients which save money without compromising care.

Expertise in non-musculoskeletal injury
Sports Medicine Physicians have also received additional training in the non-musculoskeletal aspects of Sports Medicine (Box below). Appropriate management of these conditions is vital to safe participation in sports, recreational, and exercise activities.

Common non-musculoskeletal sports medicine problems

- Evaluation and management of concussions and other head injuries
- Evaluation and management of athletes with chronic or acute illness (such as infectious mononucleosis, exercise-related asthma, or diabetes)
- Evaluation of physiologic capabilities for both competitive athletes and "work athletes" in service occupations such as law enforcement or firefighting
- Return to play decisions in the sick or injured athlete
- Assessment of nutrition and performance issues in athletes
- Exercise prescription for patients who want to increase their fitness
- Recommendations on appropriate strength training and conditioning activities
- Assessment of injury risk and development of injury prevention protocols

Sports Medicine does NOT just mean the competitive athlete
Regardless of whether they are running a marathon, biking their favorite trail or taking their first steps toward a healthier life, an AMSSM Sports Medicine Physician understands each person, and is uniquely qualified to help them achieve their personal best.

Sports Medicine Physicians are also ideal providers for the non-athlete or weekend athlete and are excellent resources for the individual who wishes to become active or begin an exercise program. For the “weekend warrior” or “industrial athlete” who experiences an injury, the same expertise used for the competitive athlete can be applied to return the individual as quickly as possible to full function. Sports Medicine Physicians also receive training in the detection and non-operative interventions for arthritis and osteoporosis, delaying joint replacement, and reducing fracture risk in affected individuals.

Getting people moving
Keeping patients healthy is the common goal between medical professionals and the insurance industry. Of the myriad of medical specialties which exist today, only Sports Medicine is centered within a wellness-based (rather than disease-based) model. Beyond the abilities of other clinicians, Sports Medicine Physician Specialists, by virtue of their training, have the capability to take a sedentary population and incorporate the health-beneficial effects of exercise into people’s lives. Most adults fail to adequately exercise and about one-quarter are completely sedentary. Although it remains important for Primary Care Physicians to talk to their patients about the benefits of different types of exercise, research clearly indicates that proper counseling can be more effective when delivered by a practitioner with more extensive training. That practitioner is the Sports Medicine Specialist.