

MULTIDISCIPLINARY JOINT COMMITTEE ON SPORTS MEDICINE

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

The importance of Sports Medicine for a country

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There is a strong relationship between physical activity and health. Physical activity is essential to good health and quality of life. Physical activity and exercise exerts a positive influence on muscular-skeletal, cardiovascular, respiratory, hormonal-immunological, hematological, neuro-sensory and gastrointestinal systems. Physical activity levels are declining in most developed countries and in all age categories. Regular physical activity and sport, especially during childhood and adolescence, promotes proper growth and development, maintains health and counteracts negative risk factors such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, osteoporosis, hypertension, coronary heart disease and other ailments. Risk factor profiles for many ailments limiting the quality of life are beneficially affected by physical activity and exercise. The Sports Medicine specialist and other parties involved in this work may have a substantial impact on all the above points raised including reduction of health care costs.

Sports medicine is a multidisciplinary clinical and academic speciality of medicine dealing with health promotion for the general population, by stimulating a physically active lifestyle and diagnosis, treatment,

prevention and rehabilitation following injuries or illnesses from participation to physical activities, exercises and sport at all levels.

Sports medicine is globally defined and recognised not solely for taking care of the sporting elite athletes. It is mainly focused on:

- Prevention of chronic diseases caused by sedentary lifestyle as a major area of increasing interest which can partially be served by expertise in sports medicine.
- Pre-participation clinical screening and examination before exercise and competition as well as medical assistance to the athletes engaged in all sports.
- The use of supplements, pharmacological agents, doping control and gender verification and its complex moral, legal and health-related difficulties.
- Special medical issues associated with international sporting events of athletes, including disabled athletes, such as the effects of travel and acclimatization.
- Research in basic science and extensive clinical undertaken in the sports medicine domains within a great variety of specialities.

The increased attention from media and significant financial and political interactions in international sports events creates an atmosphere where business and sports meet, not always for the benefit of involved athletes. Consequently, sports medicine can encompass an array of areas including internal medicine, exercise physiology, cardiology, orthopaedics and traumatology, physical and rehabilitation medicine etc.

Sports medicine is a multidisciplinary specialty, integrating teams with physicians, athletic trainers, physical therapists, coaches, sport scientists, nutritionists, psychologists, athletes and other related specialties. Besides his clinical expertise, the sports medicine specialist should be considered as head of the multidisciplinary sports medicine team, coordinating the direct planning of the athlete's health activities, related to his health.

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