

What to expect from your athletic Trainer

Prevention: The athletic trainer implements measures to prevent and/or mitigate injury, illness and long-term disability. This includes emergency action planning for cervical spine injuries, concussion management, sudden cardiac arrest, asthma, anaphylaxis and other medical situations.

Immediate care: The athletic trainer provides care procedures used in acute and/or emergency situations, independent of setting.

Examination and assessment: The athletic trainer uses patient history and appropriate physical examination procedures to determine the patient's impairments, function and disposition.

Therapeutic intervention: The athletic trainer determines appropriate treatment, rehabilitation, and/or reconditioning strategies.

Direction: The athletic trainer practices through the consultation, referral, or guidelines of a physician or other qualified healthcare provider.

Referral: The athletic trainer refers to an appropriately licensed health care provider if the athletic injury requires further definitive care, or the condition is outside an athletic trainer's scope of practice.

Administration: The athletic trainer documents all procedures and services in accordance with local, state and federal laws, rules and guidelines.

Professionalism: Athletic trainers must maintain professional licensure and continuing education. Student aides, volunteers and coaches may not represent themselves as athletic trainers.

WASHINGTON STATE



Additional Information

Find additional information about the Athletic Training Advisory Committee, on the Department of Health web site at www.doh.wa.gov.

Laws and rules governing athletic trainers are in Chapter 18.250 RCW and Chapter 246-916 WAC.



The Athletic Trainer



Public Service Announcement

What is an athletic trainer

Athletic training encompasses preventing, examining, diagnosing, treating and rehabilitating of emergent, acute or chronic injuries and medical conditions. The American Medical Association (AMA), Health Resources Services Administration (HRSA), and the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recognize athletic training as an allied health care profession.



Washington State Department of Health

Athletic Training Advisory Committee
PO Box 47852
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Athletic Trainers: Healthcare providers for life and sport

Qualifications to become an athletic trainer

1. Graduate from a bachelor's or master's degree program approved by Washington's Secretary of Health.
2. Pass the national Board of Certification exam.
3. Obtain and maintain state licensure.



Where athletic trainers work

- Schools (K-12, colleges, universities)
- Clinics, hospitals and physicians' offices
- Professional athletics facilities
- Other workplaces (commercial, government, military)



Concussion management

Certified athletic trainers fill a key role in identifying, sideline screening, managing, and critical return to play decisions for concussions.

When an athletic trainer is present at sporting events, the chances dramatically increase of accurate recognition and appropriate treatment of a concussion. Appropriate recognition and care are essential to minimize possible negative complications of concussion and other related head injuries (which can range from delayed recovery to permanent brain damage).

Appropriate concussion evaluation includes (at a minimum) a history of injury, symptom check, neurological screening, and functional assessment. Under Washington's Lystedt law (RCW 29A.60.190) any youth athlete suspected of having a concussion must be immediately removed from participation. Before the youth returns to participation, a licensed health care provider trained in evaluating and managing concussions must evaluate and clear the athlete. Athletic trainers meet this criteria, along with a variety of other licensed health care providers (e.g. physicians, physician assistants, nurse practitioners).



What if I have a complaint

If you are concerned that someone is practicing as an athletic trainer without a license or if you have a complaint about an athletic trainer, you may contact the Department of Health. This includes, for example:

- Students, volunteers or coaches without a license practicing or presenting themselves as an athletic trainer.
- An athletic trainer was under the influence of alcohol or drugs while providing health care services to patients.
- An athletic trainer provided sub standard care.

What happens after I file a complaint

The secretary of health can discipline athletic trainers or unlicensed people presenting themselves as athletic trainers. They are disciplined if they are found to have violated Washington State laws and rules related to athletic training. All complaints are reviewed. The department may interview all people involved. A decision is based on information from the investigation. If the provider is found in violation, the department may take several actions. If the provider is not found in violation, no action will be taken and the complaint will be closed.