



Playing it Safe

RAISING AWARENESS OF SAFETY ON THE PLAYING FIELD

What is an Athletic Trainer?

An *athletic trainer* specializes in the prevention, diagnosis, assessment, treatment and rehabilitation of muscle and bone injuries and illnesses, and is educated in emergency care for catastrophic injuries such as spinal cord injuries, sudden cardiac arrest, heat illness and concussions.

Working under the direction of a licensed physician, and in cooperation with other healthcare providers, athletic trainers are recognized as allied health professionals by the American Medical Association (AMA) and must meet the qualifications set by a state regulatory board and/or the Board of Certification, Inc.

Who's Taking Care of Your Kids

More than Just a "Trainer"

What comes to mind when you hear the word "trainer"? Most likely you think of a personal trainer - someone who works with individuals to design and/or monitor an exercise program.

There are significant differences between *personal trainers* and *athletic trainers* though - both in terms of qualifications and practice.

Athletic Trainers:

- Must obtain, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in athletic training from an accredited university or college and complete appropriate clinical training
- Must pass a comprehensive exam to earn the athletic trainer (ATC) credential
- Must keep their knowledge and skills current by participating in continuing education
- Must adhere to standards of professional practice set by one national certifying agency and to a national code of ethics

The practice of athletic training includes:

- Physical medicine and rehabilitation services
- Life-saving medical skills in emergency situations
- Apply protective or injury-preventive devices such as tape, bandages and braces
- Prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate injuries and illnesses (acute and chronic)
- Coordinate care with physicians and other healthcare professionals
- Make return-to-activity/return-to-work decisions

Athletic trainers work in a variety of settings, including schools, colleges, professional sports, clinics, hospitals, corporations, performing arts venues, municipalities (e.g. fire and police departments) and the military.

So then, what's a personal or fitness trainer?

A personal trainer develops, instructs, monitors and changes an individual's specific exercise program in a fitness or sport setting. Anyone, regardless of education or background, can become a personal trainer. Personal trainers can earn credentials through a number of agencies and can work as fitness trainers without formal instruction or certification.

Personal trainers:

- May or may not have higher education in health sciences
- May or may not be required to obtain certification
- May become certified by any one of numerous agencies that set widely varying education and practice requirements
- May or may not participate in continuing education

The practice of personal training includes:

- Assess fitness needs and design appropriate exercise regimens
- Work with clients to achieve fitness goals
- Help educate the public about the importance of physical activity

Personal trainers work in health clubs, wellness centers and various other locations where fitness activities take place.

