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Internationals Soccer Club: A History of Excellence

An Introduction to Sports Massage Therapy

Kim Cathey, LNT.,CSMT.

Athletes who are looking to improve performance and increase their competitive edge do so by adopting a training schedule to enhance their skill, strength, stamina, suppleness and speed. The degree to which they develop and utilize these qualities will depend on other factors such as the level of competition, the sport played, and possibly their position in a team. However, no matter which sport, the aim is nearly always to systematically increase the level of training and thereby subject the body to gradual and controlled overuse.

It is this overuse which may often create problems and imbalances in the soft tissues. If these are ignored and allowed to become chronic, they will not only hinder the athlete's rate of improvement, but also, in many cases, their performance may well suffer and ultimately the athlete may be susceptible to developing more serious conditions. Certainly if they are unable to perform at their best, they may be more at risk for other more traumatic forms of injury. For example, a player involved in a contact sport who is "carrying" an injury may not have their usual level of agility. The result might be that they might suffer an extrinsic injury because of not being fully prepared for the contact suffered from an unexpected hit or fall.

Benefits of Sports Massage

Massage, applied skillfully, is the most effective therapy for releasing muscle tension and restoring balance to the musculo-skeletal system. Received regularly this may help athletes prevent injuries, which might otherwise be caused by overuse. A constant build-up of tension in the muscles from regular activity may lead to stresses on joints, ligaments, tendons, as well as the muscles themselves. Accidents, sports injuries, surgeries, repetitive actions on the field and tension can all cause problems that, too often, take up permanent residence in our bodies. These muscle imbalances may develop and often go undiagnosed until they are serious enough to cause the athlete discomfort or impede performance. When vigorous exercise leaves your muscles feeling fatigued, stiff and sore or when sports injuries leave muscles cramped, shortened and tight, Sports Massage Therapy can help.

My name is Kim Cathey. I am a licensed Massage Therapist certified in Sports Massage. As a skilled Sports Massage Therapist, I am able to detect variations in the soft tissues and by using the correct techniques, help the athlete maintain a much healthier physical state. I am trained in many specialized types of bodywork that I may use exclusively or in combination with other methods to achieve the outcome that we are looking for. I have completed many hours of education which includes a variety of bodywork techniques, extensive anatomy and physiology, kinesiology, study of sports injuries, and knowledge of when massage is and is not appropriate. I am licensed by the State of Ohio Medical Board. I am a professional member of the AMTA and hold special certification in Sports Therapy.



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I use a combination of cross fiber friction; PNF (proprioceptive neuromuscular facilitation) stretching; Ortho-Bionomy; deep compressive effleurage; strain-counterstrain and muscle energy techniques to help return your muscle to it's optimal physical conditioning.

Sports massage techniques benefit muscles by warming and softening tissue, realigning muscle fibers; helps soften and heal scar tissue. Massage stretches and lengthens shortened muscles and reduces spasms. It improves circulation which speeds up removal of waste products that can make you sore, and brings in the oxygen and nutrients your muscles need to rejuvenate. A deep massage also promotes restful sleep, allowing your tissues time to repair naturally. It may therefore be reasonably claimed that one of the greatest benefits of sports massage is in helping prevent injury. Many sports and fitness enthusiasts and most pro-athletes rely on regular massage as an important part of their health maintenance routine.

With continued sports therapy, I am able to tell by the "feel" of the muscle tissue if the athlete is using their body in a way that may jeopardize their performance and offer tips on how to correct such problems.

Because Sports Therapy helps your muscles return to normal function, it can help you resume activity sooner after injury, enhance your performance and help your muscles work more efficiently.

Sports therapy can...

- * Identify tender areas before they develop into injuries.
- * Prevent acute injuries from becoming chronic injuries.
- * Stretch and relax muscles
- * Relieve pain and spasms
- * Lessen muscle adhesions and soften scar tissue.
- * Increase range of motion.
- * Decrease DOMS (delayed onset muscle soreness).
- * Speed recovery time.
- * Instill confidence and increase performance