

Everyone is an "Athlete"

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Merriam-Webster defines an athlete as: 'a. a person who is trained or skilled in exercise, sports or games requiring physical strength, agility, or stamina. b. a person who exhibits dexterity or coordination especially an execution of learning physical tasks.' The term athlete is often confusing for physicians and patients of all ages. As sports medicine physicians we are asked by young physicians in training: 'Just how much of your practice is real Sports Medicine?' When we look puzzled, the question is often clarified somewhat sheepishly: 'How much of your practice is in the care of the elite athlete?'

Each day as a sports medicine physician, we encounter a patient who has set goals and challenged themselves beyond our perceived boundaries for them. That may be someone who ran his or her first 5k, or a 65-year-old battling pancreatic cancer, training for an Ironman in between chemotherapy sessions, or a 75-year-old who simply walks daily. Our patients accomplish goals and increase stamina at all ages and skill levels. As sports medicine physicians our role is to help them improve cardiovascular endurance, muscular strength and overall health during all stages of life. So, many of us would choose to answer the young physician with the famous quote by American Medical Society for Sports Medicine (AMSSM) Founder John Lombardo, MD: 'all of our patients are athletes.' The ageing demographic is an often overlooked

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population who are filled with aspirations, hopes and challenges common to all physically active people.

THE AGEING ATHLETE

The 2017 AMSSM issue in BJSM focused on the needs of the young athlete. This year we are honoured to contribute to the ever-growing knowledge base of the *Ageing Athlete*, cutting a wide swath through the spectrum of life. This inclusion, or attitude of embracing everyone as an athlete reflects the importance of physical activity, the rehabilitation to being physically active, and exercise as the encouragement to mobility and overall health.

In this issue we look to a key member of the AMSSM, Dr. Bill Roberts to provide perspective on the relationship of running and osteoarthritis (*see page 142*). He provides tips to coach our older athletes and advise them on the advantages and disadvantages of running. DrMark Batt also details the realities of ageing and the critical importance of physical activity (*see page 145*). Drs Amy Powell and Aurelia Nattiv present recommendations on how to prevent fractures and screen for osteoporosis in the mature athlete (*see page 143*). Two articles bolster the mounting evidence that exercise benefits cognitive function (Dr Joseph Michael Northey) and executive function (Dr Teresa Liu-Ambrose) in the senior population (*see pages 154 and 182*). Dr Marcia Rodrigues-Franco further presents evidence that Pilates training improves balance among a population of older adults (*see page 197*), and Dr David Hunter then addresses the question that practicing physicians so often ask, 'what is the role of dietary supplements for the treatment of osteoarthritis?' (*see page 167*).



THE 2018 AMSSM ANNUAL MEETING

Plan to attend the 2018 AMSSM Annual Meeting, 'Reach for the Future of Sports Medicine,' to be held on April 24–29 at the Walt Disney World Swan and Dolphin Resort. In addition to challenging case presentations and top-quality research sessions, the conference will focus on Physical Activity and Fitness, Concussion Care, Common Performance Enhancing Drugs and Doping, Pain Management, Nutrition, Cell Therapies and Foot & Ankle Injury. Please join us!

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