



National Athletic Trainers' Association

The Athletic Trainer

*By Josh Thompson
Secondary Board Representative*

The athletic trainer is a career that I am sure you know about but may never have considered a health profession: the athletic trainer. These professionals provide an invaluable service to many different people, not just the athletes. It is their job to help prevent, assess, treat and rehabilitate a wide variety of injuries in multiple settings. Because their role in assisting injured athletes in getting back on the field as soon as possible is so well known, this article is going to focus on the little considered side of their work in corporations.

Busy employees facing massive amounts of pressing work do not have time to be worrying about injuries they may obtain during the course of their everyday lives or on the job, but for someone like a manufacturing line operator, an injury to severely effect their productivity. This is where the certified athletic trainer comes in. Through supervising and educating employees about injury prevention and properly treating new injuries, an athletic trainer can greatly reduce the downtime of an effected worker.



Companies with high volumes of worker's compensations claims can actually save huge amounts of money by hiring a trainer to keep their workers healthy. According to the National Athletic Trainers' Association, fifty percent (50%) of companies that hire a certified trainer decrease the number of injury by at least half. This can result in cutting some big losses that would have resulted from these prevented injuries.

Certified athletic trainers can also be seen working at schools, universities, private clinics, and hospitals, as well as for performing arts groups and the military. Anywhere that a motion-related injury can occur or where such an injury would affect performance of an individual is a potential job opportunity.

In order to become a certified or licensed athletic trainer, you must have at least a bachelor's degree. The majority of trainers, seventy percent (70%), also have a master's degree or doctorate. After receiving your degree, you must then mass a national certification examination covering prevention, diagnosis, immediate care, treatment, rehabilitation, administration, and professional development. After this, you must maintain medical-related continuing education in order to maintain your certification. Most states also require you to be licensed in order to practice.

So the next time you see a trainer at one of your school's games, go up and talk to them about what they do. You might be surprised at what you learn.

