
Athletic Trainers – Not “Trainers”

These days people are more active, more interested, more educated than ever before. We're trained in fitness, sports, computer applications – even parenting. You can't accurately describe anyone using simply the word “trainer.”

Here are some differences between an athletic trainer and a personal trainer.



ATHLETIC TRAINER

An athletic trainer is an expert at recognizing, treating and preventing musculoskeletal injuries. ATs meet qualifications set by the Board of Certification, Inc., and adhere to the requirements of a state licensing board. ATs practice under the direction of a physician and are members of a health care profession recognized by the American Medical Association.

Requirements:

- Must obtain, at minimum, a bachelor's degree in athletic training
- Must pass a comprehensive exam to earn the 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

Daily Duties:

- Provide physical medicine and rehabilitation services
- Prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate injuries (acute and chronic)
- Coordinate care with physicians and other health care professionals
- Work in schools, colleges, professional sports, clinics, hospitals, corporations, industry, military, performing arts



PERSONAL TRAINER

A personal trainer develops, monitors and changes an individual's specific exercise program in a fitness or sports setting; some personal trainers also make nutrition recommendations. Personal trainers can earn credentials through a number of agencies and can work as fitness trainers without formal instruction or certification.



Requirements:

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

Daily Duties:

- Assess fitness needs and design appropriate exercise regimens
- Work with clients to achieve fitness goals
- Help educate the public on the importance of physical activity
- Work in health clubs, wellness centers and other locations where fitness activities take place



Know who's taking care of you and your athletes! Be sure you're getting the right health care from the right health care professional for the right condition.

About the National Athletic Trainers' Association:

Athletic trainers are health care professionals who specialize in the prevention, diagnosis, treatment and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses. The National Athletic Trainers' Association represents and supports 32,000 members of the athletic training profession. NATA advocates for equal access to athletic trainers for patients and clients of all ages. NATA members adhere to a code of ethics. For more visit www.nata.org.
