

# Athletic trainer

Business



Introduction Athletic trainers are professionals in health care specializing in recognizing, rehabilitating, preventing, and managing injuries resulting from physical activity. They are called certified athletic trainers in the world. They work under a licensed physician in a team of health care givers and professionals like coaches and athletic administrators. Athletic trainers are an essential link between medical communities and sport programs. They help in prevention and treatment of injuries for all kinds of people, from athletes to industrial workers.

Athletic trainers are recognized by the Medical Association of America and their specialty is injuries of the muscles and skeleton. They are always the first at injury scenes and they have to identify, assess, and evaluate injuries in order to provide immediate care. They are not the same as personal trainers or fitness trainers who just train people on how to be fit physically (Scnckhe 47). Athletic trainer's responsibility starts with prevention of injuries. It encompasses educating patients and athletes on measures to take in order to avoid the risk of getting injured.

They may also give advice on proper usage of equipment and protective devices like tape, braces, and bandages. Athletic trainers have to be the first one to arrive at a scene if someone has been injured in a sporting activity. They recognize and assess the injury giving immediate care where necessary. They frequently contact other health care professionals to discuss rehabilitation programs, treatments, guidelines, and injury avoidance measures. Athletic trainers are supervised by physicians though it varies depending on medical settings, some may meet the supervisor daily while others may plan to meet weekly or even fortnightly.

These meetings take place in order to discuss specific injuries and their treatment options. The physician also guides the athletic trainer in treating and evaluating clients (Statistics). Athletic trainers have administrative responsibilities including; meeting on a regular basis with a director of athletic or administrative officer with regard to purchasing, budgets, policy implementation, and other issues related to business. Athletic trainers work with players and coaches on a daily basis. Working conditions/environment and draw backs Most athletic trainers work indoors in most cases.

Those in jobs related to sports spend their time outdoors. This job may require standing for long hours, working with machinery or medical equipment. One should be able to run, crouch, walk, stoop, crawl, or kneel. Travelling may also be required. Working schedules vary depending on settings. Those in jobs not related to sports have an established schedule with weekends and nights off though the working hours vary by employer ranging from 40 – 50 hours in a week.

Athletic trainers in sports related jobs on the other hand have longer and varying schedules. They must be available during team games and practices which in most cases happen on weekends and evenings (Brett 39). Their schedules may change on short notices due to games being rescheduled. This results to them working 6 days to 7 days a week which includes late hours regularly. Athletic trainers who teach in high school are forced to work for about 60 to 70 in a week.

In universities and colleges they work with a single team like women's basketball when it is on season. This makes them work for 50 to 60 hours

which is most common. 40 to 50 hours are the normal working hours for most athletic trainers during off season. Athletic trainers who work with professional teams of sports work the most hours. They work during practices, training camps, and competitions.

They may work for 12 hours in a day. Being an athletic trainer comes with its load of stress as expected in many of the occupations related to health care. They are responsible for the health of their clients which includes making quick decisions at times. These decisions may affect the career or health of their client. Winning pressure may affect athletic trainers just like the teams experience in competitions.

The most difficult problem faced by athletic trainers is recognizing and treating concussion related to sport. Provision of medical clearance for participation in sports and injury treatment requires medical and legal issues. Threats of lawsuits for athletic trainers are in existence whether the athlete should play or not. There are principles of medical malpractice in place to govern claims made by athletes concerning injuries or deaths resulting from improper treatment by the athletic trainer and other health professionals involved (Train 320). This does not make them hate their jobs; in fact many of them love it.

This kind of work leads to creation of friendship and loyalty bonds. This is shown by the way most of them stay in their work position for a long period of time. In competitive sports, athletic trainers receive recognition when the teams they work with succeed, for example, World Series ring of championship. In jobs not related to sports, athletic trainers have their own

experiences; those working with space administration and aeronautics assist in preparing astronauts for space travel. Employment and salaryThe bureau of labor statistics in United States approximated that by 2004 athletic trainers held around thirteen thousand and one hundred jobs in the whole nation. Most of the jobs relate to sports but there are many athletic trainers who work outside the world of sports.

Of the 13100 trainers, 23% were in gambling, amusement, and recreation working in recreation and fitness centers with sports teams of the youth or recreational teams. 21% were in universities, professional schools, and colleges. 16% in general surgical and medical hospitals and the rest were working in elementary schools, secondary schools, professional industries of sports, physicians' offices, and performing arts companies. Athletic trainers work on a full time basis and are therefore entitled to a salary and benefits. The salary depends on responsibilities given, working experience, and job setting. The annual salary ranges from \$35, 000 to \$ 70, 000 (Brett 40).

Benefits vary too. Some employers pay for the fees for the certified education trainers' continuing education. These payments vary in amount by employer. Other benefits are; health insurance, paid offs for illnesses and vacations. Some benefits are unique to the occupation like tickets to sporting events Outlook of the job Employment for this career is projected to grow very fast, maybe than the average of all occupations.

Acquisition of license requirements was increased for athletic trainers thus leading to a greater sense of acceptance in their roles as qualified providers of health care. Health care industries will increase the employment of

athletic trainers. For example, in physicians' offices and ambulatory services of health care. Technology advancement and preventing care emphasis are also expected to make the demand for athletic trainers increase. Their good work is expected to open the eyes of many employers into seeing the advantages of hiring an athletic trainer in case of injuries. They will see the cost effectiveness of preventing these injuries and treating them on site (Connie 34).

There is a rising concern of student athletes' health and efforts are underway to provide athletic training programs. This will create many opportunities in elementary schools which will also include teaching responsibilities leading to an increase in salary. Positions in universities, professional schools, colleges, and professional sports clubs will be hard and more competitive to find since they are already taken. Most athletic trainer job openings are expected to come up due to growth of jobs and not for replacement of workers who leave the job because the turnover is limited. Turnover is low because many trainers prefer working with same administrators, players, and coaches.

Athletic trainers are taking more administrative duties, adapting to recent technology, and can work with increased numbers of people, thus there is an expected change in the occupation in the decade. Anyone looking for a job and is able to adapt will have the best prospects. Employment is expected to increase at a rate of twenty four percent between 2006 and 2016.

Qualifications, skills, success, and advancement Due to their nature of work, dealing directly with people, athletic trainers are required to have good communication skills and social skills. They should have the ability to

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manage stress associated with difficult situations, for example, in case of disagreements between parents, coaches, and clients on the best suited medication.

They should be organized, with good time management skills, inquisitive, and desiring to help people. Good knowledge of first aid is required as well as being energetic. They have to be prepared to follow up an injured athlete's health till they get well. Athletic trainers should hold a bachelor's degree from an athletic trainer program that is accredited (Connie 38). This course involves class work and clinical practices. Subjects taught are health and science related like physiology, human anatomy, biomechanics, and nutrition.

Holding a bachelor's degree is a requirement for certification by the board. In order to be certified one has to pass an examination that comprises practical and written questions. Even after this, they must continue taking health related courses and follow the code of ethics to keep the certification. There are plenty of colleges and universities in North America offering this program and with college athletics becoming popular everyday opportunities for class and clinical work are bound to increase. All athletic trainers must be licensed. This is a requirement by labor department.

70% of the certified trainers hold a doctoral or master's degree. Some positions in the career require these qualifications in order to apply most probably in universities and colleges. This serves them with a great opportunity for advancement in the career. In high school a certificate in teaching may come in handy since they include teaching responsibilities.

Advancement includes rising from an assistant athletic trainer to a head athletic trainer and to athletic director. They could get involved in a group practice and get the role of a manager.

Some of them are involved in sales of athletic and medical equipment.

Starters are advised to get an athletic trainer in their local area to learn the job and get experience. They school for four years.