

What is a Pediatric Sports Medicine Specialist?

If your child or teen has an injury or illness that affects sports performance, exercise, or activity, a *Pediatric Sports Medicine Specialist* has the expertise, experience, and qualifications to treat his or her youth-specific problems.

In growing children, injuries and medical problems in the bones, muscles, ligaments, tendons, and joints (ie, musculoskeletal conditions) often are quite different from conditions more commonly seen in older patients. Special training and experience in pediatric sports medicine allows these specialists to appropriately treat the unique sports-related medical needs of children and teens.

What kind of training do pediatric sports medicine specialists have?

Pediatric sports medicine specialists are medical doctors who have had at least

- Four years of medical school
- Three additional years of general pediatric residency training

In addition, some have

- One to 2 additional years of fellowship training in sports medicine
- Certification of Added Qualification (CAQ) through exam by the American Board of Pediatrics
- Practice experience

What types of treatments do pediatric sports medicine specialists provide?

Pediatric sports medicine specialists diagnose, treat, and manage the musculoskeletal and medical problems of children and teens, including the following:

- Sprains and strains
- Dislocations
- Ligament injuries
- Minor fractures and avulsions
- Apophysitis
- Tendinitis
- Overuse injuries

- Cartilage injuries
- Exercise-induced asthma
- Concussions
- Nutrition and supplement issues
- Diabetes
- Eating disorders
- Stress fractures
- Heat illness
- Unique conditions of the athlete with special needs

Where can I find a pediatric sports medicine specialist?

Pediatric sports medicine specialists practice in a variety of medical settings, including children's hospitals, university medical centers, large community hospitals, private practice clinics, sports medicine clinics, multispecialty groups, and orthopaedic clinics.

Pediatric sports medicine specialists—the best care for children and teens

Children and teens are not just small adults. They cannot always say what is bothering them. They cannot always answer medical questions, and are not always able to be patient and helpful during a medical examination. Pediatric sports medicine specialists know how to examine and treat children and teens in a way that makes them relaxed and cooperative. They arrange their offices with children and teens in mind. They may have toys, videos, and reading materials for young people available. Pediatric sports medicine specialists are trained and equipped to examine, diagnose, and treat injuries and illnesses in active children and teens.

If your pediatrician suggests that your child or teen see a pediatric sports medicine specialist, you can be assured that he or she has a wide range of treatment options, extensive training, and expertise in dealing with children and teens and in treating sports medicine problems.

American Academy of Pediatrics

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The American Academy of Pediatrics expresses its appreciation to all those who contributed to this brochure, including the Section on Sports Medicine and Fitness Executive Committee.

The information contained in this publication should not be used as a substitute for the medical care and advice of your pediatrician. There may be variations in treatment that your pediatrician may recommend based on individual facts and circumstances.

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