The Role of the Rehab Team in Sports Medicine

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Coordinator of Rehabilitation
The Rehab Team

• High School Setting
  • One Athletic Trainer
  • Orthopedic and/or Emergency Physician
    • May be have coverage of certain sporting events
  • Family Physicians
  • EMS coverage at certain events
• Physical Therapist at Clinic
  • Increased rehab at off site locations
The Rehab Team

- NFL Medical Staff
  - 4 Full time staff ATCs, 2 Seasonal ATCs
  - 2 Staff Dual Credentialed AT/PT
    - Rehabs done in house
  - 2 Orthopedic Physicians, 2 General Internists
  - Team Dentist, Chiropractor, Neurosurgeon
  - EMS with 2 Emergency Room Physicians
    - One ER physician must be a Rapid Intubation Specialist
Keys to Success

• Many individuals who will effect the athlete’s care and outcome
• Coordination – who is the leading “voice”
• Continuity of Care – keeping the goals in mind and making sure the rehabilitation is seamless between providers
• Communication – it all comes down to great communication between providers
• Over communicate for Clarity!!
The Rehab Process

• Begins with a moment of injury
• Pre-determined Roles – important for all to understand their role
• Maintain One Lead Communicator
  • Head Athletic Trainer
  • Emergency First Responders (EMS)
  • Team Physician
• Non-life Threatening Emergent Injuries
  • Head ATC remains lead communicator for Medical staff / EMS
• Life Threatening Emergent Injuries
  • Turn lead role over to EMS / ER certified Physician
Early Phase – Non Emergency

• Determination of injury – immediate evaluation

• Necessity of further testing
  – For diagnostic purposes to confirm or rule out suspicions

• Coordination of Care
  – Schedule diagnostic tests
  – Schedule appointments with appropriate specialists as necessary
  – Obtain all information to devise the appropriate course of action
Early Phase - Emergency

• Coordinate Hospital paperwork for athlete
• Coordinate communication between team physicians and emergency room physicians
• Coordinate contact with athlete’s emergency contact / family
• Provide regular communication of progress to medical staff, coaches, and family members
Early Phase - Emergency

• Coordinate athlete’s discharge from hospital and return to home
  • Away games need to coordinate transport home
• Coordinate all billing claims and medical dictations from emergency room visit and surgery
• Coordinate family stay with athlete in cases of extended hospitalizations following emergent care
Plan of Action

• Lay out a detailed Rehabilitation Plan
• Include all parties necessary on details
  – Physicians, AT’s, PT’s, Coaches, Agents/Parents
  – Most importantly the Athlete!
• Allow for smooth transition to the true “rehab” portion of the recovery for the athlete