



Position Statement

Pre-Participation Physical Exams (PPEs) for Student Athletes

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Background:

- The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends annual health maintenance exams for children ages Birth - 21. The number of children who actually receive annual exams drops rapidly once children reach school age and continues to fall as children move into adolescence.
- For many student athletes, a pre-participation physical examination (PPE) may be their only encounter with a health provider throughout the entire year, and as such, offers the opportunity to provide health maintenance for teens.
- A complete health maintenance exam includes a comprehensive health and developmental history, comprehensive physical exam, appropriate immunizations, laboratory tests, hearing and vision screening, and health education. The anticipatory guidance provided during annual checkups has been shown to be effective in changing a number of health-related behaviors of patients and their parents. This is especially important for adolescents, who may engage in numerous risk-taking behaviors that threaten their health and well-being. Research indicates that many adolescents want information on topics such as exercise, stress, depression, sexually transmitted infections, and weight control.
- The examination performed in the medical home allows for access to an ongoing medical record, leaving less room for error, less risk for missed or intentionally omitted medical information compared to examinations performed outside the medical home.
- Reports in the literature show that adolescent athletes often substitute the PPE for their annual exam. While the PPE is appropriate for clearing a child for sports participation, it is **not** a replacement for a complete checkup.
- Parents and student athletes may not understand that when a provider performs a PPE, they are not performing all the other components of the annual checkup.

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- This is not unique to Wisconsin. Nationally, older children and adolescents are much less likely to get an annual checkup as compared to their younger counterparts. This is true regardless of insurance status.
- Regularly scheduled well-child checkups within the medical home promote healthy development and enable early identification and treatment of diseases, often before they become chronic or debilitating.
- Qualifications of the examiners: The PPE monograph 4th edition published by the AAP and written jointly by experts from these entities, and endorsed by same:
 - American Academy of Family Physicians
 - American Academy of Pediatrics
 - American College of Sports Medicine
 - American Medical Society for Sports Medicine
 - American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine
 - American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine

This monograph suggests:

- Physicians with an MD or DO degree have the clinical training and unrestricted medical license that allows them to deal with a broad range of problems encountered during the PPE. Regardless of their training, practitioners performing the PPE should competently screen athletes that would affect sport participation or place the athlete at undue risk.
- One of the key purposes of the screening exam is to screen for conditions that may be life threatening or disabling. Cardiac conditions which can lead to sudden death are rare, often have subtle findings on exam and are difficult to detect. A comprehensive cardiovascular history and examination performed by a practitioner with thorough training in these conditions is best qualified to perform the PPE.
- Although chiropractors may have the training to screen for orthopedic conditions, they do not have the training related to screening for cardiovascular conditions, they do not routinely provide growth and developmental screening, immunizations or anticipatory guidance related to adolescent risk taking behavior.
- Most chiropractors locate near primary care physicians. Granting chiropractors the ability to conduct PPEs therefore would not alleviate any access to care issues children may encounter.

American Academy of Pediatrics, Wisconsin Chapter

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Position: The Wisconsin Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (WIAAP) opposes any policy that would permit chiropractors to be allowed to clear a student athlete for participation via a PPE. This expansion of the scope of practice would endanger the health of Wisconsin's students.

Sources:

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) State Advocacy Infographic - Pediatric Education and Training - <http://bit.ly/2pe2COY>

American Medical Association (AMA) Issue Brief: Chiropractic - <http://bit.ly/2pe3Rhb>
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American Medical Association (AMA) Geomap: Wisconsin Primary Physicians to Chiropractors
<http://bit.ly/2oE8b5v>

National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Sports Medicine Handbook -
<http://on.ncaa.com/2oEfOsq>
Page 11, Guideline 1C: "Medical Evaluations, Immunizations and Records."

Preparticipation Physical Evaluation, 4th Edition

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American Academy of Family Physicians, American Academy of Pediatrics, American College of Sports Medicine, American Medical Society for Sports Medicine, American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine, American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine

Scope of Practice Issues in the Delivery of Pediatric Care - <http://bit.ly/2oDUNhM>
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