

Sports Medicine

Mission Statement

The Sports Medicine Program is dedicated to providing outstanding health care for all our student-athletes. We are committed to the prevention, evaluation, management and rehabilitation of injuries and illnesses and work with team physicians, ancillary medical personnel, coaches, and strength and conditioning staff to ensure our athletes are physically and mentally prepared for practice and competition. When an injury occurs, our goal is to do everything possible to return the athlete to a level equal to or above that of their pre-injury status.

Routine and Orthopedic Care

If an athlete needs to see a general practitioner for routine medical problems or questions about colds, flu, sore throat, etc. they should contact their athletic trainer to schedule an appointment at the appropriate athletic training room Physician Clinic.

In the event of an injury, the athlete's athletic trainer will arrange for an orthopedic consultation with a team physician.

If additional medical or diagnostic care is required, the athlete will be referred to Wardenburg Health Center or to a provider off-campus. Each referral requires a written authorization by the athletic trainer. All off-campus referrals will include a Sports Medicine authorization form and the athlete's health insurance information.

Referral Policy

The Athletics Department will only be responsible for medical visits to outside physicians, medications and vision correction if the athlete first speaks with an athletic trainer and follows the Sports Medicine referral procedures. It is the responsibility of the athlete to be familiar with our referral procedures and to contact their athletic trainer and communicate medical concerns prior to seeking medical attention outside of the Dal Ward Clinic, including Wardenburg Health Center. After speaking with the athlete, the athletic training staff will determine who needs to see a physician, where they need to be seen and which physician will be seen. If the athlete or coaching staff does not follow this process, the Athletic Department will not be responsible for payment of the medical care.

Second Opinions

CU team physicians make decisions regarding individual treatment plans, rehabilitation programs and return to sports participation. Every athlete has the right to seek a second opinion for any medical problem and the Sports Medicine staff will make an appointment, upon request.

Alternatively, the athlete may select a physician of his/her choice. However, if the athlete makes the appointment he/she must obtain the approval of the Head Athletic Trainer in advance, or charges for the second opinion will be the responsibility of the athlete. We will make every effort to provide treatments or rehabilitation programs as prescribed by the physician, provided the CU team physicians approve the plan.

Emergency/Urgent Medical Procedures

The following procedures should be followed in the event that an emergency or urgent medical situation arises when a staff athletic trainer is not present.

Emergency

In the event of a life-threatening medical emergency, call 911 immediately. Then call the athletic trainer for the athlete's sport as soon as possible. If there is no answer, leave a detailed message and a call back number. If the athlete needs to be admitted, transported and/or cared for in an emergency room or hospital, the athlete is responsible for all charges unless the injury is related to sports participation. The athlete and his/her family are responsible for providing personal health insurance information to emergency medical personnel, even if the problem is related to sports participation.

Urgent Medical Problem

If there is an urgent medical matter that is not life-threatening, call the athletic training room and speak with the athletic trainer for the sport. Every attempt will be made to have the team physician attend to the athlete. However, if the medical problem arises outside of normal business hours and if the athlete is unable to reach an athletic trainer, seek medical attention as needed, then call the training room (303-492-3801) and leave a message with a call back number. The athlete will be responsible for all medical charges if the injury is not related to sports participation and, in the event of a sports-related injury, if they fail to contact an athletic trainer.

We strongly encourage every athlete and his/her family to be knowledgeable about the requirements of their individual health insurance plan and to follow those guidelines. Many plans require members to use specific physicians or medical facilities and will not pay medical expenses if the member goes out-of-network. In addition, the plan may require notification or pre-authorization and may deny payment of expenses if the correct procedures are not followed. The health insurance card includes a member telephone number. Call this number when there are questions. See pages 180-181 for detailed information about the CU Athletics Department medical insurance policy.

Dental Care

While we do provide mouth-guards for competition and dental care needed as a direct result of an athletically-related mouth injury, we do not cover routine dental exams or x-rays, fillings, root canals, or extraction of wisdom teeth. For routine dental care, the Department of Sports Medicine has dentists on a referral list and will help you make an appointment. If a dental injury does occur, please report the injury immediately to a staff athletic trainer and we will make the appropriate referral.

Eye Glasses & Contact Lenses

The NCAA allows the Athletics Department to pay for contact lenses or glasses if they are needed to compete in athletics. All student-athletes will have an eye exam during their pre-participation physical, and if this test reveals a vision problem, we will schedule a follow-up exam with our optometrist. We will purchase enough lenses to get you through your competitive season. However, if you lose lenses frequently or abuse the privilege of receiving lenses, you will lose this privilege.

Exit Physicals

All student-athletes must undergo an exit physical within one month of the completion of their final season of intercollegiate athletics. Failure to complete the physical will release the University of Colorado from any medical liability and/or financial responsibility for any and all athletically-related injuries.

Eligibility

It is our policy that once the athlete exhausts his/her eligibility, the Athletics Department is no longer responsible for payment of visits to Wardenburg Health Center or to outside physicians or medical facilities unless visits have been authorized by a staff athletic trainer.