

ATHLETIC THERAPY

Rapid Return to Work and Play

Certified Athletic Therapists are experts in treating acute and chronic injuries to the musculoskeletal system (muscles, bones, and joints).

Best known for providing immediate on-field emergency care of professional and national athletes, Athletic Therapists are skilled in returning athletes to competition and maximizing their performance potential as fast as possible after an injury. Those same skills and techniques also make Athletic Therapists very effective in treating the injuries sustained by everyday active Canadians, including:

- **Common injuries from falls, daily activities and sports**
- **Chronic and recurring conditions, pre-surgery and post-surgery**
- **Emergencies at sporting events such as concussion, fractures, and spinal injuries**
- **Workplace and motor vehicle accidents**

Athletic Therapists rehabilitate injuries using the Sports Medicine Model, a method that focuses on the individual taking an active approach to rehabilitate their orthopedic injury. This results in a faster recovery, a reduced chance of further injury, and fewer visits to a healthcare professional.

Certified Athletic Therapists are recognized by the credential CAT(C)

FINDING AN ATHLETIC THERAPIST

From a neighbourhood sports medicine clinic, to a community soccer game, to the Olympics, Certified Athletic Therapists are found working in:

- **Sports medicine and therapy clinics**
- **Professional sports, such as the NHL, CFL, NBA, MLB**
- **National and international games, such as the Olympics and Pan Am Games**
- **Community, high school and post-secondary athletics**
- **Teaching and scientific research in universities and colleges**
- **Municipal services and industrial workplaces**

Canadians are often referred to Athletic Therapists by other healthcare professionals including Orthopedic Surgeons, Family Physicians, paramedical professionals, and Case Managers for motor vehicle and workplace accidents.

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SCOPE OF PRACTICE

Athletic Therapy covers a full spectrum of therapy skills and modalities including:



PREVENTION. Athletic Therapists prevent or minimize the possibility of injury using strategies and techniques such as patient education, conditioning programs, postural evaluation, and equipment selection

ASSESSMENT. Athletic Therapists are experts at evaluating the type and severity of injuries using established best practices

EMERGENCY & ACUTE CARE. Usually the first to respond when an injury occurs, Athletic Therapists provide basic emergency life support, recognize and manage acute traumatic neurological dysfunction, and prepare individuals for entry into the healthcare system

REHABILITATION. Preparing individuals to re-establish their pre-injury lifestyle, Athletic Therapists take an active approach to rehabilitation, including manual and movement therapies, electrical modalities, and targeted exercises to ensure musculoskeletal stability and function

RECONDITIONING. Athletic Therapists work with individuals on a customized basis to condition for preventive measures and re-condition with exercise rehabilitation to avoid further injury

CERTIFICATION & ONGOING TRAINING

Becoming a Certified Athletic Therapist in Canada is a stringent process. After completing a Bachelors degree, Athletic Therapists:

- **Complete the Athletic Therapy program at an accredited university or college**
- **Complete 1,200 hours of supervised on-field and in-clinic practical experience**
- **Acquire a valid First Responder certificate**
- **Pass the written and practical portions of the National Certification Exam**

Once certified, they must demonstrate that they have remained current with developments in the profession, including:

- **Achieve the required continuing education credits**
- **Maintain professional liability insurance coverage**
- **Maintain CPR/HCP certification**

To ensure the highest standards of practice and professionalism, Certified Athletic Therapists are governed by the Canadian Athletic Therapists Association and must adhere to a strict Code of Ethics and Code of Conduct.

ABOUT THE CANADIAN ATHLETIC THERAPISTS ASSOCIATION (CATA)

**CATA is dedicated to the advancement and growth of
Athletic Therapy through advocacy, education, and research.**

At the forefront of Canada's sports medicine community, the Canadian Athletic Therapists Association (CATA) is the national governing body for Certified Athletic Therapists practicing in Canada. Established in 1965 by a small group of athletic trainers working with professional hockey and football teams, CATA is now a self-regulating organization representing over 2000 members.

**Working closely with CATA, there are seven regional
Athletic Therapist association chapters:**

Athletic Therapists Association of British Columbia (ATABC)
Alberta Athletic Therapists Association (AATA)
Manitoba Athletic Therapists Association (MATA)
Saskatchewan Athletic Therapists Association (SATA)
Ontario Athletic Therapists Association (OATA)
La Corporation des Thérapeutes du sport du Québec (CTSQ)
Atlantic Provinces Athletic Therapists Association (APATA)



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