

REACH NEW HEIGHTS

CATA National Conference

April 30 – May 2, 2026 | Calgary, AB



Conference Program



CANADIAN
ATHLETIC
THERAPISTS
ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION
CANADIENNE DES
THÉRAPEUTES
DU SPORT

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

Jon Cornish

Canadian Football Hall of Famer and CFA Charterholder

Calgary, Alberta



Jon Cornish is a former Canadian Football League (CFL) running back who spent his entire nine-year career with the Calgary Stampeders. Cornish is a three-time recipient of the CFL Most Outstanding Canadian Award and was named the league's Most Outstanding Player in 2013. He finished his career as the fourth-leading rusher in Stampeders history with 6,844 yards and holds several CFL records. After retiring from football, Cornish entered the finance industry and is currently an investment advisor and CFA Charterholder at RBC Dominion Securities. He is also involved in various non-profit organizations and charities, including the Black Chambers of Commerce and the You Can Play Project.

Cornish was recently named the chancellor of the University of Calgary, where he will help to build relationships in the community and promote the school's goals and priorities. He is known for his advocacy work and has been a champion for LGBTQ2S+ communities and at-risk youth. Cornish brings a unique approach to his presentations, drawing on his experiences as a CFL football player and his work in leadership roles in business and the community to inspire and empower solutions that help individuals manage challenges within themselves, their peers, and their workplace.

KEYNOTE TOPICS:

Wins and Losses Both Provide Knowledge

Sports Lessons Apply in Community

Eliminating Barriers is Priority



WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Nervous System 911

Kathlyn Hossack

Certified Athletic Therapist and Head Instructor & Practitioner at The Woven Path and Evoke Body + Mind

Judy Lefort

Instructor & Practitioner at The Woven Path and Evoke Body + Mind

In this workshop, we will present a basic understanding of the neurobiological impact of stress and performance as it occurs in the first responder and practitioner's body and mind during high pressure situations.

Thursday, April 30 | 8:00 AM - 11:00 AM

Mastering the Sacro-Iliac Joint: Easy, Safe, and Effective Methods

Jane Eliza Stark

Certified Athletic Therapist, MS, OMP

The sacro-iliac joints are notoriously difficult to assess and treat. Their intricate topography and complex arthrokinematics often require greater finesse than conventional approaches.

This workshop introduces an alternative way to address this challenging articulation. Participants will learn a precise standing evaluation of the sacro-iliac joint, followed by treatment in the same position.

Thursday, April 30 | 11:30 AM - 1:30 PM

Ergonomic Accommodation Strategies for Musculoskeletal Injuries

Rachel McKenzie

Certified Athletic Therapist and Vice President at MoveSafe

Jenna Nichol

Certified Athletic Therapist and Lead Consultant at MoveSafe

This session will explore different ergonomics and workplace accommodation strategies for common musculoskeletal injuries seen in the clinic (knee injuries, spine pathologies, shoulder injuries, concussions, etc.).

Thursday, April 30 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Shockwave Therapy - The Basics and The Pearls

Brent Smith

Certified Athletic Therapist and Director of Educational Strategies at Enovis Canada

This workshop will offer participants a review of both radial pressure and focused shockwave therapies as well as the opportunity explore treatment/application techniques and objectives in a small group format.

Thursday, April 30 | 2:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Lived Experiences of Female Certified Athletic Therapists in Canada: Data, Dialogue, and Direction for Change

Becky Swan

Certified Athletic Therapist with the West Vancouver Police Department

Charlotte van Audenrode

Certified Athletic Therapist and Therapist at The Edge School for Athletes & Youth Sports Injury Clinic

This session presents the findings from a national survey conducted by the Canadian Athletic Therapists Association Board of Directors exploring the lived experiences of female Certified ATs across diverse practice settings. The survey examined perceptions of respect, gender-based treatment, and safety within their working environments.

Thursday, April 30 | 5:00 PM - 6:00 PM



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Early bird prices available until February 15, 2026!

Register today at www.athletictherapy.org/public/calgary26

LECTURE DESCRIPTIONS

Adapt to Innovate: Health & Performance Considerations for All Athletes to Reach the Podium

Dr. Katelyn Mitchell, Bryan Yu, Alanna Mah, Adam Kingsmill

Para sport is growing in Canada and worldwide with para swimming, para cycling, and para athletics included at the 2025 Canada Summer Games and over 4000 para athletes competing at the 2024 Paralympic Games. Certified ATs may find themselves working with para athletes on the sideline or in clinical settings, therefore, it is imperative to understand key considerations to best support health and performance.

The panel will include an expert group of multidisciplinary practitioners (athletic therapy, strength and conditioning) and para athletes to discuss key considerations for medical care and adaptive strategies for rehab and training to optimize high performance. The session will begin with an overview of the diverse heterogeneity in para sport and athlete classifications, followed by an introduction to each panelist. The discussion will focus on key objectives that will enhance learning for participants in three topic areas:

1. Medical and Injury Management: Understanding the impacts of common injuries; access to care; rehabilitation and return to sport, and conditioning for optimal care of para athletes.
2. Adaptive Training and High Performance: Approaches to strength and conditioning, including adapted training and environments for para athletes.
3. Education and Knowledge Translation to Practice: Identify key strategies for Certified ATs and other practitioners to optimize rehab and performance with para athletes.

The interactive discussion format will allow panelists to share lived experiences and for participants to engage directly with questions. Participants will gain key insights and develop an understanding of how to adapt core principles of athletic therapy and strength and conditioning for optimal care of para athletes.

Beyond the Bone: Using the Biopsychosocial Model to Elevate Clinical Reasoning and Leadership

Dr. Matthew Kutz

Athletic therapy is evolving—and so must our approach to clinical leadership and clinical reasoning. This session invites participants to move “beyond the

bone” by integrating the Biopsychosocial (BPS) model with leadership practices rooted in Contextual Intelligence (CI) to improve patient interactions. By layering BPS insights with CI principles like 3D Thinking™—the ability to draw from hindsight, insight, and foresight—clinicians will gain tools to navigate complex patient cases, lead diverse teams, and adapt to changing clinical roles. The BPS model acknowledges that optimal patient care emerges when biological, psychological, and social factors are considered together, rather than in isolation. Participants will learn how easily the BPS model can be applied to leadership capacity and contextually intelligent leadership. Patients and clinicians thrive when care is delivered through a BPS lens, whether that person is a patient, colleague, or team member.

This session will explore how psychological and social contexts influence biological outcomes, and how situational awareness, adaptability, and perspective-taking can elevate both patient care and professional influence. Certified ATs will leave equipped to think critically, navigate complexity and uncertainty, and deliver whole-person care in a rapidly changing clinical world.

Beyond the Cycle: Hormonal Considerations in Female Athlete Health and Performance

Dr. Tracy-Lynn Reside

Hormones play a critical role in training adaptation, injury risk, and recovery, yet remain under-discussed in athlete health. Female athletes face unique challenges across the lifespan — from puberty and menstrual cycle fluctuations to contraceptive use, pregnancy, and the transition through perimenopause and menopause. This session will highlight the latest evidence and research on how hormones influence performance, with a focus on practical applications for Certified ATs. Special attention will be given to the impact of hormonal contraception on performance variables and injury risk, alongside strategies for integrating menstrual cycle tracking and hormonal health into care plans. By applying this knowledge, Certified ATs can not only improve health and performance outcomes but also support athlete retention by reducing injury downtime, enhancing communication, and fostering long-term engagement in sport.

By the end of this session, participants will be able to: Summarize current evidence on hormonal influences on performance, injury, and recovery across female athlete life stages.

LECTURE DESCRIPTIONS

Beyond the Thermometer: A Canadian Perspective on WBGT and Heat Illness Management *Dr. Michael Robinson*

This session delivers an essential, evidence-based update on managing exertional heat illness. It will present novel findings from a recent Canadian Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) monitoring project, using this data to justify the necessary expansion of heat illness action plans across the country. Participants will learn to apply WBGT principles to make informed, data-driven decisions on activity modification and cancellation to protect athletes.

The lecture will then transition to on-field clinical management, focusing on the rapid recognition and differential diagnosis of the full spectrum of heat illnesses, from heat cramps to life-threatening exertional heat stroke.

While this session won't detail rigid, step-by-step protocols, it will equip participants with actionable intervention plans for heat illness, grounded in the established scope of practice for a Certified AT. Participants will leave with enhanced confidence in implementing the most effective on-site cooling strategies and activating a robust emergency action plan, ensuring they are prepared to safeguard athlete health in any high-risk thermal environment.

Bridging Prevention and Rehabilitation: Evidence-Informed Approaches to Concussion Care *Dr. Amanda Black, Dr. Kathryn Schneider*

Concussion prevention and rehabilitation approaches are constantly evolving. Evidence-based prevention strategies, such as policy changes, training modifications, and educational interventions, have demonstrated potential to reduce concussion risk, yet they remain variably and unevenly implemented. To maximize adoption, Certified ATs can play a key role by addressing psychological and sociocultural barriers that arise for athletes, coaches, parents, administrators, and through interactions across levels of sport.

More recently, sensor-based technologies have been introduced to monitor head impacts, offering new insights but also raising important questions about validity, feasibility, and implementation. At the same time, rehabilitation has shifted from prolonged rest to active, individualized care. Targeted interventions addressing vestibular, visual, cervical, and

psychological domains have demonstrated efficacy in supporting timely and safe return-to-play as well as in the prevention of persisting symptoms.

This session will provide Certified ATs with practical updates on concussion prevention and rehabilitation strategies, delivered through a lecture format with opportunities for questions and discussion. By the end of the session, participants will be able to:

- List examples of evidence-based concussion prevention strategies and identify psychological and sociocultural influences on their adoption.
- Explain the potential benefits of and limitations of sensor technology in prevention.
- Describe evidence-based active rehabilitation strategies for concussion recovery.
- Apply integrated prevention and rehabilitation approaches to practice.

Integrating Cognitive-Motor Principles in Athletic Therapy: From Perception-Action Coupling to Dual Task Training *Dr. Johanna Hurtubise, Dr. Katie Mitchell*

This lecture will provide Certified ATs with a deeper understanding of key cognitive-motor terms and their application in rehabilitation. Concepts such as perception-action coupling, dual tasking, cognitive-motor integration, and visuomotor integration are increasingly relevant in evidence-based practice, yet their terminology is often used interchangeably or misunderstood. We will explore the neuroscience behind these concepts, highlighting how the brain integrates sensory input, attention, and motor output to produce efficient, adaptable movement.

Participants will gain insight into the similarities and differences between these terms and how to translate their theoretical understanding into clinical relevance, outlining practical strategies to integrate these principles into progressive rehabilitation plans. Attendees will leave with an improved ability to critically apply these concepts and select appropriate interventions based on patient needs for improved outcomes. This session is designed to bridge the gap between neuroscience and clinical practice, empowering Certified ATs to create rehabilitation programs that target not only physical recovery but also the cognitive processes essential for safe and effective return to activity.

LECTURE DESCRIPTIONS

Navigating Life As a New Athletic Therapist: A Panel Discussion *Dr. Matt Miller, Stewart Munroe, Julie Lamoureux, Cathy Salvo, Becky Swan*

Transitioning from student to Certified AT is a pivotal and often challenging step in your professional journey. While it's an exciting milestone, it can also feel overwhelming as you move from the structured environment of school into the dynamic world of professional practice. This panel discussion brings together a diverse group of newly certified and experienced Certified ATs from across Canada to share their insights, lessons learned, and real-world advice.

The session will cover a wide range of topics that are essential for early-career Certified ATs. Panelists will discuss how to manage your first contracts, set realistic expectations, and build strong relationships with clients and employers. You'll gain insight into how to develop a professional presence, communicate your value, and build lasting connections that support long-term success. In addition to clinical work, the conversation will explore how to handle the practical, everyday challenges of working as an Certified AT. From juggling multiple roles and setting boundaries, to marketing your services and understanding your worth, these are the skills that aren't always taught in the classroom but are critical to thriving in your career. Mental wellness and maintaining a healthy work-life balance will also be key themes, with a question period at the end.

Whether you're approaching certification or already in your first years of practice, this session offers support, perspective, and practical tools to help you start strong and grow with confidence.

On-Field Treatment of Sport-Related Dental Injuries: Help Athletes Return to Play Quickly *Dr. Hans Stasiuk*

This presentation will discuss the types of dental injuries that you might see and how to initiate treatment if a team dentist isn't present. Recommendations for first aid supplies to keep in your trauma bag to treat dental injuries will be discussed. You will also learn the importance of having an ASD Certified Sports Team Dentist as part of your Sports Medicine Team and how to choose the right one.

Recognition and Treatment of Exertional Collapse Associated with Sick Cell Trait (ECAST) *Dr. Kelley Henderson*

Sickle cell trait (SCT) is a hereditary condition in which the red blood cells of the body are not uniform and can decrease the ability to carry oxygen throughout the body. During exercise or exertion, the abnormal hemoglobin may change from a round to a quarter-moon shape known as "sickling". This poses significant risk to athletes as it is a medical emergency and may result in sudden death. Athletes who carry the SCT may be at risk of developing ECAST based on environment, hydration level, and presence of asthma. High heat and humidity may impact the maintenance of hydration levels. High altitude may decrease the body's ability to circulate oxygen which may become even further impaired during a sickling event. Patients typically present following a period of at or near maximal exertion and may complain of muscle pain, cramping, and weakness. Differential diagnosis may be heat stroke or cardiac-related conditions. There is not a specific clinical test or lab value to confirm an on-field sickling event. Recognition of symptoms should prompt removal from activity. Treatment should consist of early administration of high flow oxygen at a rate of 15 L/min and hydration strategies. Activation of the EAP and referral to the emergency department should follow. Patients may return to activity when symptoms have resolved and have normal organ function and physician clearance. A graded approach to activity should be developed and education about intensity levels and the role of hydration, heat, and altitude should be provided.



LECTURE DESCRIPTIONS

The Athletic Therapist as Project Manager: Lessons from Planning Medical Services for Canada's Largest Multi-Sport Event in One of the Smallest Provinces *Angie Hurley*

A look behind the scenes. Breaking down the preparation and planning of the Medical Services functional area for the 2025 Canada Games in St. John's NL from the perspectives of an Certified AT, a previous Sponsored Medical Personnel, and a Project Manager.

- Overview of Involved Parties: Host Society, Canada Games Council, NSOs, Major Games Canada, etc.
- Overview of CGC Standards and Functional Area
- KPIs and Stats
- Roadmaps and Timelines
- Role of Sponsored Medical Personnel
- Challenges
- Innovations
- Successes
- Role of Project Management and transferability to other aspects of Sport MedicineReflection; what I would do differently
- Future of Medical Services at Canada Games
- Future of athletic therapy at the Canada Games
- Canada Games as a development pathway for the future of CATA Major Games candidates

Whole-Person Health Care: Transformative Strategies for Improving Patient-Centered Outcomes in Athletic Therapy *Dr. Nicolette Harris*

Evidence increasingly demonstrates that factors such as mental health, social determinants, and patient education profoundly influence adherence to treatment, recovery timelines, and readiness to return to work, sport, or daily function. Thus, the evolving landscape of athletic therapy calls for a shift away from treating isolated symptoms of injury or disease toward holistic, patient-centered models that address the interconnected psychological, social, and emotional determinants of recovery. Whole-person health care offers a multidimensional approach that emphasizes treating patients as integrated individuals rather than focusing narrowly on their musculoskeletal health or pathology. This session seeks to define and contextualize whole-person health care in athletic therapy.

Through the biopsychosocial approach, this presentation will illustrate how to identify and respond to barriers that complicate a patient's rehabilitation. Practical strategies will be shared to help clinicians integrate psychosocial considerations

into their practice, including validated screening tools, motivational interviewing, and collaborative goal-setting techniques. Participants will also explore methods for leveraging social support and community resources to promote successful reintegration into school, work, or sport. By embedding principles of whole-person health care, attendees will be able to implement strategies immediately to deliver more comprehensive, patient-centered care and improve long-term outcomes.

