



AUSTRALASIAN COLLEGE OF  
SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS

# MEDICAL PRACTITIONER REFERRAL GUIDE

Sport and Exercise Physicians are specialists in the comprehensive management of musculoskeletal problems and medical illnesses in the active population as well as exercise prescription in the management and prevention of chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular disease and osteoarthritis. All Sport and Exercise Physicians have experience looking after elite athletes in team environments and apply these principles to the management of all patients, whether they are recreational athletes, manual workers or those with or without chronic diseases simply wanting to safely manage their activity levels.

## HOW SPORT AND EXERCISE PHYSICIANS CAN HELP YOU

A Sport and Exercise Physician is a Fellow of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP), who has completed the ACSEP Training Program of at least 4 years duration.

Sport and Exercise Physicians are specialist trained in:

1. assessing and diagnosing musculoskeletal injuries or medical illnesses that occur in exercising individuals
2. devising and coordinating a comprehensive, multifaceted management program with an emphasis on safe return to activity and play decisions as well as prevention of recurrence, including
  - concussion
  - major joint injuries eg - eg. knee ACL, shoulder dislocations, hip impingement
  - muscle injuries - eg. quadriceps, hamstring
  - tendinopathies
3. managing medical problems in the context of exercise including
  - asthma,
  - obesity,
  - heart disease,
  - diabetes,
  - osteoarthritis
  - nutritional deficiencies
4. assisting specific populations with sport and exercise issues

- young and adolescent
- elderly
- pregnant
- disabled
- indigenous

5. prescribing exercise programs for the relatively inactive and those with chronic diseases
6. managing medical issues that may occur in a sporting setting with specific advice on
  - medical screening of athletes,
  - team and athlete travel,
  - event coverage
  - anti-doping, supplements and performance aids

Whilst many injuries can be diagnosed clinically, many of our Fellows are also trained in the use of on-site ultrasound for assessing musculoskeletal injuries as well as guiding various interventions. Our Fellows can access all the appropriate investigations from x-rays to blood tests, ECG's to complex imaging, including specialist rebates for MRI scans. Once the diagnosis is made, the appropriate treatment plan can be developed with the patient's goals in mind. This involves comprehensive advice on activity and exercise that can be safely undertaken, the appropriate rehabilitation program, possible interventions and return to activity decisions. Where further specialist allied health and other medical specialist advice is warranted, rapid referral to the appropriate practitioners can be arranged.

The multi-disciplinary allied health team can include sports physiotherapists, osteopaths, chiropractors, podiatrists, sports dietitians, myotherapists, sports psychologists and exercise physiologists. Medical Practitioners can assist patients with timely facilitation of referrals onto sports psychologists and exercise physiologists to access the Medicare rebate for these services in the setting of mental health or chronic disease care plans respectively.



## FAQ'S

### DOES MY PATIENT NEED A REFERRAL?

A medical referral is required to see a Sport and Exercise Physician, if the patient wishes to claim the Medicare rebate for the consultation. GP referrals are valid for 12 months from the initial consult. Other medical specialist referrals are valid for 3 months from the initial consult. Referrals are to be for one problem only and any new problem will require a new referral.

A medical referral is not required to see a Sport and Exercise Medicine Registrar. Our Registrars are supervised by our Sport and Exercise Physicians and are all accredited trainees of the Australasian College of Sport and Exercise Physicians (ACSEP). They have completed the pre-requisite medical and hospital based training.

### WHAT DOES MY PATIENT NEED TO BRING TO THE CONSULTATION?

Patient are asked to please bring:

- Their GP / specialist referral and any other treating practitioner referral
- ALL previous imaging (films, discs and reports) relevant to the presenting condition.
- Pathology results and other special investigations
- Comfortable clothes to change into for the examination part of the consultation

### HOW LONG DO CONSULTATIONS TAKE?

Initial consultations are between 30- 60 minutes in duration. Review consultations can take 15-30 minutes, but these are at the discretion of the Sport and Exercise Physician.

### CAN THE PATIENT GET A REBATE?

All consultations are Medicare rebateable provided the patient has a valid GP or specialist medical referral. It is up to the patient to ensure their current referral is up to date. The Medicare rebate for the initial and review consult are similar to that for Specialist surgeons and are not time based. Patients are also eligible for a Medicare rebate for any relevant diagnostic ultrasound or ultrasound guided intervention provided it complies with the Medicare guidelines and they have a valid referral. Consultations with our Sport and Exercise Medicine Registrars attract the nonVR-GP Medicare rebates, at a significantly lower rate than our Sport and Exercise Physicians. These consultations are time based. Consultations with Sport and Exercise Physicians are not eligible for rebates through Private Health Insurance schemes. For full details of consultation fees it is best you contact individual clinics directly.

### CAN A SPORT & EXERCISE PHYSICIAN REFER MY PATIENT FOR A REBATEABLE MRI SCAN?

As Specialists, Sport and Exercise Physicians can refer patients for rebateable MRI scans, on most body parts, provided they adhere to the Medicare Benefit rules. Our Sport and Exercise Medicine Registrars, like GP's, can refer patients for limited GP rebateable MRI scans again provided they adhere to specific Medicare guidelines.