

Athletic Trainers – Not “Trainers”

Look around you. The world today is on the move, and people are becoming more active, more interested, more educated. We’re getting trained in fitness, sport, even in computers.

As a result, the word “trainer” has lost its meaning.

Let’s see if you know the difference between a personal trainer and a certified athletic trainer.

CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER

An athletic trainer is a person who meets the qualifications set by a state regulatory board and/or the Board of Certification, Inc., and practices athletic training under the direction of a physician.

Certified athletic trainers:

- Must have at least a bachelor’s degree in athletic training, which is an allied health profession
- Must pass a three-part exam before earning the ATC credential
- Must keep their skills current by participating in continuing education
- Must adhere to practice guidelines set by one national certifying agency

Daily Duties

- Provide physical medicine and rehabilitation services
- Prevent, assess and treat injuries (acute and chronic)
- Coordinate care with physicians and other allied health providers
- Work in schools, colleges, professional sports, clinics, hospitals, corporations, industry, military

PERSONAL TRAINER

A personal trainer is a person who prescribes, monitors and changes an individual’s specific exercise program in a fitness or sport setting.

Personal trainers:

- May or may not have higher education in health sciences
- May or may not be required to obtain certification
- May or may not participate in continuing education
- May become certified by any one of numerous agencies that set varying education and practice requirements

Daily Duties

- Assess fitness needs and design appropriate exercise regimens
- Work with clients to achieve fitness goals
- Help educate the public about the importance of physical activity
- Work in health clubs, wellness centers and various other locations where fitness activities take place

If you have questions about the person providing health care for you, for your student or for a colleague, speak up! Be sure you’re getting the right care for the right situation.

Use this section as a tool to help in your outreach and education efforts.

Pass it On

