

# WHAT IS AN ATHLETIC TRAINER?

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Certified Athletic Trainers (“ATC”) are health care professionals trained in the prevention, assessment, treatment and evaluation of both immediate and ongoing sports-related injuries. They are also trained in first aid and CPR.

*“Athletic training is practiced by athletic trainers, health care professionals who collaborate with physicians to optimize activity and participation of patients and clients. Athletic training encompasses the prevention, diagnosis, and intervention of emergency, acute, and chronic medical conditions involving impairment, functional limitations, and disabilities.”*

NATA POSITION STATEMENT

To become certified athletic trainers, students **must graduate with bachelors or masters degree from an accredited professional athletic training education program and pass a comprehensive test administered by the Board of Certification.** Once certified, they must meet ongoing continuing education requirements in order to remain certified.

In 1998, the American Medical Association (AMA) adopted a policy recommending that certified athletic trainers be available to all schools with athletic programs. Likewise, the collegiate setting is one of the largest for NATA members. More than 17 percent of NATA members work for a university or junior college, providing medical coverage for athletics teams.

Athletic trainers in the secondary school and collegiate settings provide injury prevention and conditioning programs, injury evaluation, prepare athletes for practice and competition, implement treatment and rehabilitation programs for injured athletes and provide first response to acute injuries and medical emergencies that take place during competition.

Students who want to become certified athletic trainers must earn a degree from an accredited athletic training curriculum. Accredited programs include formal instruction in areas such as injury/illness prevention, first aid and emergency care, assessment of injury/illness, human anatomy and physiology, therapeutic modalities, and nutrition. Classroom learning is enhanced through clinical education experiences. **More than 70 percent of Certified Athletic Trainers hold at least a master’s degree.**

**Athletic Training is not the same profession as personal training.** And Certified Athletic Trainers work with more than just athletes – they can be found just about anywhere that people are physically active.

[Athletic Trainers Compared with Personal Trainers](#)

[Athletic Training Education Overview](#)

[Facts about Athletic Trainers](#)