

SPORTS THERAPY

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Sports Therapists are experts in musculoskeletal disorders and treat pain, injuries, and chronic conditions through a combination of hands-on treatment and exercise therapy. Much like Physiotherapists, Sports Therapists undergo an intensive 3-year degree course which focuses on the musculoskeletal system and on restoring, maintaining and maximising movement in order to relieve pain and injury, improve functional, sport and exercise performance and increase quality of life.

Sports Therapy vs Sports Massage

There is a very common misconception that Sports Therapy and Sports Massage are simply two names for the same thing. The two are commonly confused, however, Sports Massage is only a single element of Sports Therapy, and there is actually a great deal of difference between the two.

Sports massage focuses entirely on relaxing soft tissues to help calm symptoms and improve recovery from physical activity or injury. A sports massage therapist should not work directly on injured tissues, instead they work around the injured or inflamed areas to help encourage blood flow, lymphatic drainage, and to help ease tension in tight tissues in order to allow you to move more freely and feel less pain whilst your injury heals. If they have been trained for it, they may be able to provide you with some simple exercises or stretches to help you ease your symptoms and speed recovery yourself. Sports massage is considered an adjunct therapy – something which can be done in addition to proper treatment and rehabilitation by a trained professional.

Sports massage therapists typically train for around 6 months to gain their certificate/diploma, some may take a more advanced course to further their skills, but there is a limit to what they are safely trained to deal with.

Sports Therapy utilises the principles of sport and exercise science, incorporating physiological and pathological processes to prepare you for training, competition and where applicable, work.

A Sports Therapist is an allied health professional who has the knowledge, skills and ability to:

- Utilise sports and exercise principles to optimise performance, preparation and injury prevention programmes.
- Provide the immediate care of injuries and basic life support in a recreational, training, occupational & competitive environment.
- Assess, treat, rehabilitate and, where and if appropriate, refer on for specialist advice and intervention.
- Provide appropriate soft tissue interventions in a sport & exercise context.
- Plan and implement appropriate rehabilitation and return to training/work programmes.

Sports therapists train on a full 3 year degree programme. Training is in depth and intensive and covers areas such as anatomy and physiology, movement and injury biomechanics, sports psychology, exercise rehabilitation, emergency medical management, sports and exercise science, strength and conditioning.

Either way, Sports Therapists and sports massage therapists are both of great benefit in the right context. If all you seek is relief from symptoms to get you moving again, then a sports massage therapist would be the perfect person to help you with that. But if you want to treat the underlying issues which may be contributing to your symptoms, or you are suffering with chronic pain or an acute injury, you may be better off seeing a qualified and insured Sports Therapist.

For information or to book a free consultation call 01283 516444