



The American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians Position Statement on Pre-Participation Examinations: An Expert Consensus

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Abstract

Objective: The purpose of this paper is to present a position statement of best practices for the provision of a safe and high-quality pre-participation examination (PPE) and to provide recommendations on education requirements for doctors of chiropractic providing the PPE.

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Methods: In 2014, the American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians (ACBSP) Board of Directors identified a need to review and update the ACBSP position statements and practice guidelines in order to be current with evolving best practices. Twelve ACBSP certificants, 10 Diplomates of the ACBSP, and 2 Certified Chiropractic Sports Physicians, met in April 2015 to author a pre-participation position statement using an expert consensus process. Panel members excluded anyone with commercial conflicts of interest and included individuals with expertise in clinical sports medicine and the performance of PPEs. A literature review was performed and circulated in advance for use by the panel in addressing the topic. The position statement was written through a consensus process and accepted by the ACBSP Board of Directors in May of 2015.

Results: The ACBSP Position Statement on Pre-participation Examinations identifies the qualifications and best practices for doctors of chiropractic to perform a PPE.

Conclusion: This position statement states that doctors of chiropractic with post graduate education and current Diplomates of the ACBSP or Certified Chiropractic Sports Physicians certification have the prerequisite education and qualifying skills to perform PPEs.

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Introduction

As sport participation increases, so does the incidence of sport-related morbidity.¹ One proposed method for reducing sport-related health problems is the use of the pre-participation examination (PPE).² Over 7 million young athletes participate in high school level sport annually.³ There are concerns that the burden of performing PPEs for this growing population may overextend the health care system and that health care providers do not uniformly follow current best practices when performing them.⁴

Pre-participation examinations are conducted to protect the health and welfare of individuals who participate in sport. Although there is a lack of consensus on screening strategies, the goals of the PPE are generally consistent which includes establishing safe participation for the athletes, and identification of risk factors and health problems that could lead to future incidents.⁵ The critical end point of the PPE is the clearance decision, but providers must also determine necessity of follow-up examination.

The American Chiropractic Board of Sports Physicians (ACBSP) recognizes that no health care provider has specialization in all aspects of medical practice and advocates co-management with physicians who specialize in the involved organ system for any case in which there is clinical concern that sport participation may be restricted or contraindicated. At present, there is no current, evidence-based position statement for doctors of chiropractic on preparticipation examinations for sport. Therefore, the ACBSP resolved to develop a position statement on this topic.

The purpose of this paper is to describe the PPE healthcare provide qualifications, examination performance and management issues specific to the following areas:

1. Qualifications of doctors of chiropractic to perform a PPE.
2. Identification of PPE performance standards.
3. Best practices to obtain and synthesize the athlete health history and physical examination to formulate a clearance to participate in sport decision.

Another purpose of this position statement is to describe the roles and standards for qualified health care providers, including doctors of chiropractic, when performing the PPE.

Methods

In 2014, the Board of Directors identified a need to review and update the ACBSP position statements and practice guidelines in order to maintain consistency with evolving best practices. The ACBSP Board of Directors appointed a position paper committee of 5 ACBSP certificants. The purpose of the ACBSP Position Paper Committee was to review current ACBSP position papers to provide recommendations for consideration of revision or re-approval. The topic of the pre-participation evaluation was chosen for update by expert consensus due to timeliness and a recent increase in sporting organizations and state

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