



**NATIONWIDE CHILDREN'S**

*When your child needs a hospital, everything matters.™*

Ellen Satlof  
National Athletic Trainers Association  
In support of the Youth Sports Safety Alliance

**SPORTS MEDICINE**

Ellen –

Nationwide Children's Hospital is nationally ranked as one of the top 10 of all pediatric hospitals in the country. We are built on the foundation of providing the highest quality of healthcare for children regardless of their ability to pay. Children and teens to age 18 require specialized care, as they are still growing and their health care needs are unique. To reach their full potential, student athletes need a level of expertise that Nationwide Children's Hospital provides. We emphasize the importance of early injury recognition and treatment to our patients in order to prevent future recurrences. We work closely with and spend extra time educating parents and coaches on a variety of issues in an effort to prevent injuries. Our goal is to provide comprehensive state-of-the-art care to all patients who come into our care.

**It is in this spirit we join this call to action on behalf of young active kids in the communities we serve by promoting the following:**

1. Ensure that youth athletes have access to health care professionals who are qualified to make assessments and decisions.
2. Educate parents, athletes, coaches, teachers and others about the signs and symptoms of sports injuries and conditions (e.g., brain injury, heat illness and exertional sickling).
3. Assure pre-participation exams before play begins and, where appropriate, conduct baseline testing.
4. Ensure that sports equipment, uniforms, playing surfaces and environmental conditions are checked for safety and best conditions. Write to state legislators and members of Congress, expressing concerns.
5. Insist that research into youth sports injuries and their effects be undertaken immediately and be supported by tax dollars.
6. Support a national registry of sport-related catastrophic injuries and fatalities to improve safety and participation.
7. Demand that appropriate emergency action plans and safety and medical protocols and procedures are in place at every sporting event and facility.
8. Educate players and others that there's a difference between pain and injury; and work to eliminate the culture of "playing through pain" without assessment.
9. Ensure that both general and sport-specific safety education be a priority for every administrator, coach, parent and player.

We join your tireless effort to make sports a safe environment for the youth of today and tomorrow, and commit to support your efforts.

Sincerely,

**Thomas Pommering, DO FAAFP**

*Assistant Clinical Professor of Pediatrics and Family Medicine  
Division Chief for Sports Medicine  
Nationwide Children's Hospital*