

# Advances in Sports Chiropractic from the Olympic Athlete to the Weekend Warrior: Class IV Deep Tissue Laser Therapy

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ON ANY GIVEN MORNING, THE sun rises and, with the same dependency, athletes around the world arise for another day to do what they love. High school swimmers are awakened by their first plunge into the water, new moms do yoga to prepare themselves for the day ahead, collegiate pitchers throw balls at the targets of their frustrations, blue-collar workers shoot hoops for friendly bets, soccer all-stars hit the field to review their game strategy, runners head for the horizon leaving their troubles behind, and retired husbands gather to play a round of golf to escape their wives.

However, no matter the age, body type, sport or motivation, there is one thing that all athletes have in common; they all want to feel good and succeed. It is in this light that sports chiropractic has received a considerable amount of attention in recent years. Much of this awareness has developed over the past decade, due to an increased participation by individuals in recreational activities, the government's role in encouraging physical fitness and an increase in the publicity given to professional athletes and their injuries. Most importantly, sports chiropractic and chiropractic rehabilitation have been developing at a considerable pace, because sports DC's are keeping athletes at the top of their game through pain relief, accelerated recovery and performance enhancement.

Having found a niche amongst Emergency Medical Services and Athletic Trainers, chiropractors specializing in athletics are keeping abreast of the latest advances in the field, most recently with the use of deep tissue laser therapy, a technique that has been shown to benefit non-professional and elite athletes alike.

The basic science behind deep tissue laser therapy is compelling. Cells absorb the light and undergo significant positive changes. Studies have shown that impaired cells have a stronger response than healthy cells.<sup>1</sup> So, the light seems to produce the most benefit where it is most needed.

Lasers work by impacting cellular function. Damaged cells will absorb and become energized by photonic energy; this has been well documented with over 2,000 clinical studies stretching back 30 years. Stimulated cells increase adenosine triphosphate (ATP) production,<sup>2</sup> and dramatically reduce inflammation, pain and swelling. This modality may be considered a "healing" process, as it quickly corrects



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compromised cellular function, allowing the body to heal itself.

A good sports chiropractor gets his or her players ready for the game and keeps them healthy on multiple levels, improving performance via addressing nutrition, fitness and sports psych on top of providing quality chiropractic care. However, now with the addition of deep tissue laser therapy, sports chiropractors can also offer a variety of patients a new tool for reducing pain and accelerating their recovery to get them back on the field more quickly.

Conditions which have shown significant improvements using this form of therapy without the use

of drugs or surgery include, but are not limited to, medial epicondylitis (golfer's elbow), lateral epicondylitis (tennis elbow), patellar tendinitis, muscle strains (quadriceps, hamstrings, forearm, shoulder, oblique), joint sprains (ankle and knee mainly), carpal tunnel syndrome, neck pain and low back pain.

Whether your patient is a professional, college, high school or amateur athlete, they may benefit from laser therapy, getting individuals back into their game, whatever it may be, at the "speed of light."

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See references on page 59