

Promoting High Quality Sports Research

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The ACA Sports Council has entered into a new era -- the era of high quality research. What does high quality research mean? Well, almost all data collected has meaning, however the ability to generalize that information to the population at large is another story. If data is not collected and interpreted via appropriate and valid statistical methods and analyses, the data becomes deceiving, which in turn may adversely alter the way we address clinical issues.

So what is the Sports Council doing to develop and promote high quality research? The Sports Council Executive Board authorized the first ACA sponsored clinical study at the 1994 Ironman Triathlon World Championships in Kona, Hawaii. This was a two part feasibility study examining the ability of the Ironman doctors ("IronDocs") to perform a clinical trial and also to determine how well they could agree on a multitude of clinical variables. As always, agreement becomes the crucial word in the world of sports chiropractic. The incredible results are in, and if you're in Maui for the Sports Council's 9th annual Sports Science Symposium, you'll get to hear all about these fascinating outcomes. If you are unable to make it, keep your eyes open in Chiropractic Sports Medicine and JMPT for the results.

The research committee is also undertaking another large scale project, the development of a standardized form to be used in the field for all the athletic events in which the Sports Council doctors participate. With the incredible work of Dr. Tom Souza, the research committee is in the process of designing a standardized form that is Scantron formatted. That's right, just fill out the bubbles, and all the information that needs to be documented for the athlete at your event will be done in half the time. These forms will be introduced at the Maui convention, so again, if you want to be up-to-date with what's happening in the Sports Council, get to this convention.

More great news is coming from Oakland, California where our own Sports Council President Dr. Jan Corwin is working with computer programmers from the University of California at Berkeley to develop software that will house all kinds of epidemiologic data regarding all the athletes treated from all different sports by Sports Council doctors. Although it's in its infancy, this major undertaking will allow us to have the largest sports injury database in the country! The first group who may be using these new forms and database programs is none other than the DCs of Wrangler SportsChiropractic (WSC). Because the level of organization is so strong and because the number of athletes treated is so great, Don Aspergren (WSC director of education and research) has informed the ACASC research committee that they would like to do a pilot study using these new standardized forms. We are all looking forward to this endeavor, and we are anticipating only positive "outcomes," just as we saw in Hawaii with the "IronDocs."

Although there are other minor projects taking place within the committee, these are the newsbreakers. If you are interested in getting involved with the research committee, call me at (301) 251-2777 and we will talk about how you can help build the world of chiropractic sports research.

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