



# View From the Pyramids

AAOJ Editor-in-Chief Janice Upton Blumer, DO, FAAO

## EDITORIAL

Spring is in the air! With it, graduates ready their caps and gowns, and thoughts turn to summer fun, sports and hiking, and vacation for some. This issue of *The AAO Journal* features two articles on sports-related injuries that are responsive to osteopathic manipulative treatment (OMT): Drew D. Lewis, DO, FAAO, and Jonathan Pickos, OMS V, detail a case of restoring full squat range of motion with upslipped innominate; David M. Kanze, DO, FAAO, describes a new approach to treating scapular dysfunction; and Edward K. Goering, DO, and Lisa Qiu, OMS II, illustrate how OMT benefited an amateur soccer player suffering from worsening hip pain. These injuries are common in athletes, which begs the question, how can OMT help in injury-specific athletic concerns?

A review of the literature shows a paucity of studies on OMT in specific athlete populations. In reviewing the literature, there is a 2017 article by Curcio detailing the use of Spencer technique with baseball pitchers.<sup>1</sup> Stress fractures seem to be another area of interest for OMT studies and in particular, prevention of stress fractures in long distance runners. Brumm et al performed a study on 1800 collegiate athletes and found a statistical decrease in the number of stress fractures in male athletes after receiving OMT.<sup>2</sup>

Using OMT for prevention, not just disease or injury, seems to be a concept the profession is just beginning to explore. While we think of prevention in the public health arena, OMT for the *primary purpose of prevention* is a concept not currently taught at osteopathic medical schools. Indeed, we teach that one must have a somatic dysfunction diagnosis in order to bill and code for OMT.

Athletic performance improvement with OMT is taking on another layer of complexity, but this too is an area ripe for exploration. Short track speed skater Apolo Anton Ohno purportedly credits OMT for at least 1 of his 2 gold medal Olympic wins.<sup>3</sup>

While the majority of us do not perform to the level of Olympic athletes, the question of primary prevention OMT for sports injury needs further exploration. I live near Eugene, Oregon, known as

“Track Town USA,” which hosts some of the top track and field athletes every June. Collaboration with events such as these, as well as with collegiate teams, is primed with early findings of OMT improving athletic outcomes. Moving OMT beyond the insurance realm is a prerequisite in order for these collaborations to occur, and recognizing its benefit in terms of health promotion, not just disease prevention.

---

“**Using OMT for prevention, not just disease or injury, seems to be a concept the profession is just beginning to explore.**”

---

As for me, I don’t fall in the “extreme athlete” category and will happily hike while plodding along at my snail’s pace. For those inclined towards sports OMT and performance though, the “pump has been primed” for OMT to be the next big thing in athletic performance and injury prevention. Are you up for the task?

In Gratitude,

Janice Blumer, DO, FAAO

## References

1. Curcio JE, Grana MJ, England S, et al. Use of the Spencer Technique on Collegiate Baseball Players: Effect on Physical Performance and Self-Report Measures. *J Am Osteopath Assoc.* 2017;117(3):166-175.
2. Brumm LE, Janiski C, Balawender JL, Feinstein A. Preventive osteopathic manipulative treatment and stress fracture incidence among collegiate cross-country athletes. *J Am Osteopath Assoc.* 2013;113(12):882-890.
3. Seffinger M. Advancing osteopathic medicine through research. *J Am Osteopath Assoc.* 2012;112(9):589-590. ■