

SPORT and Osteopathy

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Are you an occasional competitor who plays in the annual inter-departmental cricket match where the loser buys the first round at the pub afterwards? Or are you bidding for gold at the next Olympics?

Both types of athlete could be helped by Osteopathy.

Osteopathy, by definition, deals with the mechanical components of the body and the far reaching effects that this can have on all aspects of the way your body functions, but one phrase in particular stands out when it comes to osteopathy and sport: **‘Maximising Potential’**. Many people who participate in sport are, in fact, performing at way below their true potential. They may be training incorrectly or using the wrong technique. They may have a poor diet or reduced fluid intake. They may be lacking in flexibility, strength or aerobic capacity, or they may even be competing in the wrong sport for the build of their particular body. For example: marathon runners don’t make good sprinters and vice versa, or someone who is not very tall is unlikely to become a basketball star.

The permutations are endless so it is often well worthwhile talking to an osteopath who might be able to help you maximise your true potential. Working on your joints, ligaments and muscles may help to improve your flexibility and also improve your technique. Advice on resistance exercises may improve your strength. Osteopathic treatment to your chest, diaphragm and rib-cage may also improve your stamina by improving your lung capacity and circulation. Diet, warm-up and warm-down procedures, training intervals and psychological aspects of sport are also areas where good advice could make all the difference.

One of the main concerns for sports participants however, is that of injury. Osteopathy has been used in this context for generations with osteopaths being present at all the major

international sporting events for many years now. The practices here at Stone and Stafford have a great interest in sport having been heavily involved with the setting up of the Osteopathic Sports care Association and also instrumental in designing and setting up a Masters Degree course in Osteopathic Sports Care at Leeds Metropolitan University. (The only course of its kind in the world!)

The area of sports injuries is very complex and can be very frustrating for the injured party. As a general rule in the early stages of injury it is useful to remember the word: ‘PRICE’ which stands for:

Protection.

Rest.

Ice.

Compression.

Elevation.



So how can osteopathy help? We would be looking not only at the injury itself, but also the reasons why the injury occurred in the first place. We would be looking to see if there is any imbalance within the body which may have predisposed you to injury. Sometimes it’s just one of those things: a rough tackle at football; a fall from a horse; a slip on the golf course, and we will treat accordingly, but other times, the cause may be much more deeply routed.

Conditions such as chronic Achilles tendon problems in runners, or shoulder problems in swimmers and racket players can result from old injuries that have never been fully addressed. We would then be looking carefully at how your body is working to see if there are ways in which we can adjust your body structure to improve the ways it works and so overcome some of those niggling injuries that seem to go on and on and take much of the enjoyment out of your sport.

Over the many years that the practices have been established (since 1978) we have had the privilege of being able to help many sportsmen and women including a number of world champions. We do, however, appreciate that sport and exercise can be vitally important no matter what standard you are at and we will do our uttermost to help you continue for as long as possible in your chosen sport.

Sports injuries and sports performance have become massive areas of interest throughout this country and beyond, and, as such, it can be very difficult to find the right person to deal with your particular problem. Please feel free to give us a call sometime to see if, like many others, osteopathy could be the way forward for you.

If you have any further questions regarding sport that have not been covered here, or in fact anything to do with how Osteopathy could help you, then please feel free to ring either of the practices to speak to one of the Osteopaths in attendance.