Free Medical Screenings to Give Special Olympics Athletes the Quality of Life They Deserve.

Healthy Athletes
MedFest®
MEDFEST is a program to facilitate the acquisition of standard sports physical examinations for currently enrolled and prospective Special Olympics athletes. Assessments are conducted by volunteer medical practitioners. Research has shown that people with intellectual disabilities often have trouble accessing sports physicals and exams, worldwide. MedFest seeks volunteer physicians and nurses to provide the required physical examinations which consists of vitals (blood pressure, height and weight), cardiology, abdominal, and musculoskeletal checks.

Healthy Athletes
Special Smiles™
• Screens the teeth, gums, tongue and mouth
• Educates about correct brushing and flossing
• Teaches the importance of diet to oral health
• Fabricates custom mouth-guards for contact events
• Refers to community for necessary dental care
• More than 20,000 athletes screened in 2003 alone
• Approximately 33% of athletes have untreated tooth decay
• Approximately 12% of athletes have oral pain
• Approximately 43% of athletes have periodontal (gum) disease

Healthy Athletes
Hearing
• Screens hearing acuity
• Creates custom swim plugs
• Makes minor repairs on hearing aids
• Consults on hearing aids, noisy environments
• Recommends medical or audiological evaluations
• More than 10,459 athletes screened since 2000
• Consistently, 30% of athletes do not pass the screening, indicating potential hearing loss. Of this 30%:
  • 50% have indication of middle ear problems
  • 50% have likely sensor neural hearing loss

Healthy Athletes
Fit Feet
• Focuses on nutrition, prevention of obesity, hydration, skin protection, tobacco avoidance and bone health
• Empowers and motivates athletes to make good lifestyle choices that will improve their long term-health, using interactive educational games, literature
• Health screenings at games include BMI and BMD measurements
• Seeks to find the best ways to convey and reinforce key concepts and information to people with ID, to encourage healthy lifestyle choices
• Pilot community-based programs underway to promote year-round fitness and good nutrition to improve health (viz. obesity, diabetes, heart disease, osteoporosis), positive self-image and quality of life.
• Has interacted with 3,000 athletes at games and in the community
• Greater than 20% of athletes tested at 2003 World Games had low bone densities (BMD)
• 56% of athletes at 2003 World Games had BMI greater than 24
• Most athletes have sub-optimal diets and hydrate with fluids such as soft drinks

Healthy Athletes
HealthyPromotion
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Healthy Athletes
FunFitness
• Surveys general exercise habits
• Assesses flexibility, functional strength and balance
• New assessment of aerobic fitness in 2005
• Educates in home exercises to improve performance
• Provides simple exercise tools
• Facilitates community referral as needed
• More than 6,000 athletes screened since 1999
• Gender and age differences noted in all tests
• 40-60% of athletes have tight hamstrings
• Greater than 60% have inadequate calf flexibility for activity
• 18-60% have weak abdominal muscles
• Greater than 50% have poor balance

To become a Clinical Director or Screening Volunteer, please visit www.specialolympicsflorida.org/healthyathletes.

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