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The International Journal of Sports Dentistry and Performance Science

Editorial Message

Message from Editor-in-Chief

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Completing the Picture of Athlete Care

Every evolution in sports medicine has begun with a simple realisation: performance does not depend on one system alone. Over time, the field has learned to look beyond injuries and muscles, beyond bones and joints, to embrace nutrition, psychology, physiotherapy, biomechanics, sleep science, and data analytics. Each addition has refined our understanding of what it truly takes to keep athletes healthy, resilient, and capable of sustained performance.

And yet, one essential component of athlete health has too often remained at the margins-

Oral health.

The launch of the International Journal of Sports Dentistry and Performance Sciences (IJSDPS) is grounded in a clear conviction: sports dentistry must no longer be peripheral to sports medicine—it must be integral to it.

This conviction is born not of ambition, but of evidence and experience. Oral health influences far more than the teeth and jaws. Periodontal disease contributes to systemic inflammation; dental trauma alters neuromuscular control; bruxism and temporomandibular disorders affect pain, posture, and motor coordination; sleep-related breathing disturbances compromise recovery, cognition, and reaction time. These

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are not isolated dental concerns. They are performance-relevant medical realities that intersect directly with injury risk, recovery trajectories, athlete wellbeing, and long-term performance sustainability.

Yet for decades, sports dentistry has largely been confined to episodic screenings, emergency trauma management, or pre-competition checklists—important, but insufficient. This limited role has reflected not a lack of relevance, but the absence of a scientific home where oral health could be examined, debated, and advanced as a meaningful component of performance science.

IJSDPS has been created to be that home.

The purpose of this journal is not simply to publish research at the intersection of sport and dentistry. Its purpose is to reframe how athlete health itself is understood. By positioning sports dentistry firmly within sports medicine and performance sciences, IJSDPS recognises the athlete as an integrated biological system—where oral health is inseparable from neuromuscular function, recovery capacity, sleep quality, systemic health, cognitive performance, and athletic longevity.

At its core, IJSDPS is medicine-driven and performance-oriented. The journal seeks to prioritise research that moves beyond prevalence and pathology to explore function, adaptation, prevention, and outcome—how oral health influences injury risk, fatigue, recovery, cognitive load, training response, and overall athletic performance. Clinical investigations, translational science, implementation studies, public health models, digital health innovations, and population-level analyses all have a place within this journal, provided they contribute meaningfully to improving athlete care.

Equally central to the **journal's vision is interdisciplinarity**. Sports dentistry does not exist in isolation. It intersects with sports medicine, orthopaedics, physiotherapy, nutrition, sleep medicine, psychology, biomechanics, rehabilitation sciences, exercise physiology, and digital health technologies. Progress in athlete care depends on these disciplines speaking to one another—not in parallel silos, but in genuine collaboration. IJSDPS is designed to serve as a bridge for that dialogue.

Inclusivity is not a subsection of this journal's mission—it is its foundation. IJSDPS is committed to advancing science that serves all athletes, without hierarchy or exclusion. The journal explicitly welcomes and prioritises research addressing women athletes, para-athletes, and athletes with intellectual and developmental disabilities, including Special Olympics athletes. It embraces the full athletic continuum—from grassroots and community sport to elite and professional performance; from local and regional contexts to global sporting systems. This journal rejects hierarchy in athlete worth and recognises performance science as a universal right, not a privilege.

A defining and intentional focus of IJSDPS is women athletes' health. Much of what is known in sports medicine and dentistry has historically been extrapolated from male-centric models, leaving significant gaps in understanding women's performance and wellbeing. Hormonal fluctuations, relative energy deficiency in sport, iron deficiency, pregnancy and postpartum states, menopause, sleep disruption, and inflammatory burden influence training tolerance, recovery, pain perception, and injury risk in women athletes. Oral health intersects with these factors in ways that directly affect both performance and long-term health. IJSDPS places women athletes at the centre of inquiry, advancing science that supports excellence without compromising wellbeing.

The journal also recognises that evidence alone does not change systems. To make sports dentistry essential, science must also be implementable. Real-world sport is complex—characterised by large populations, decentralised structures, variable resources, and workforce limitations. IJSDPS therefore welcomes research in implementation science, artificial intelligence-assisted screening, digital health ecosystems, telehealth models,

standardised protocols, and scalable frameworks of care that can translate scientific knowledge into practical, sustainable athlete health systems.

Ethics, equity, and responsibility underpin this mission. Athlete health systems must protect the vulnerable, respect diversity, and ensure access to preventive and performance-oriented healthcare across ability, gender, geography, and socioeconomic context. Research that strengthens ethical, inclusive, and sustainable models of athlete care remains central to the purpose of this journal.

As we launch the International Journal of Sports Dentistry and Performance Sciences, we extend a warm welcome to clinicians, researchers, academicians, policymakers, sporting organisations, and performance science professionals across the world to become part of this evolving scientific movement.

IJSDPS is envisioned not merely as a publication platform, but as a collaborative global forum committed to advancing integrated athlete healthcare through science, innovation, inclusivity, and interdisciplinary dialogue. **We invite professionals from Sports Medicine, Sports Dentistry, Nutrition, Physiotherapy, Rehabilitation Sciences, Sleep Medicine, Exercise Physiology, Biomechanics, Performance Psychology, Strength and Conditioning, and allied performance sciences to actively contribute to and adopt this journal as a shared academic and clinical space.**

We encourage the submission of original research, clinical studies, systematic reviews, translational research, implementation science, consensus statements, case reports, technological innovations, and interdisciplinary perspectives that strengthen athlete health, safety, recovery, wellbeing, and performance outcomes across all levels of sport.

The future of athlete care cannot be built in silos. It must be created through collective expertise, collaborative science, and shared responsibility. IJSDPS welcomes that collective effort and invites the global sporting and healthcare community to help shape the future of integrated performance sciences together.

As Editor-in-Chief, I see IJSDPS not merely as a journal, but as a discipline-defining platform—where standards are shaped, conversations are reframed, and the future of athlete health is actively constructed. The work published here is intended to inform practice, influence policy, guide education, and ultimately improve both performance and quality of life for athletes worldwide.

The inaugural issue of the International Journal of Sports Dentistry and Performance Sciences marks a moment of transition. Sports dentistry is moving—from the margins to the mainstream, from episodic care to integrated performance science.

Making sports dentistry essential to sports medicine is not about expanding territory. It is about completing the picture of athlete care.

This journal exists to help complete that picture—through science, inclusivity, collaboration, and an unwavering commitment to every athlete, everywhere.



Dr. Reena Kumar