

Program: Sexual Health for Athletes

Overview

Dr. Paul Joannides is an NCAA-approved speaker and the author of a highly-regarded book on sex that is used in medical schools and college sex-education courses across the country. Dr. Joannides has an easy-going approach that leaves athletes and coaches feeling comfortable and well informed. They will appreciate his thoughtful and down to earth look at the unique issues that college athletes face.

This talk lasts 60 minutes. (It's a good to leave additional time for Q&A, as athletes usually ask questions.) If you feel there are specific issues that are important for your athletes, Dr. Joannides will be happy to address them.

Focus: Athlete Relationships

- **When Athletes Date Athletes.** Due of the intensity of training and focus on their sport, athletes often have their own unique culture on campus. As a result, it is not unusual for athletes to feel more comfortable dating other athletes. This can bring up issues that are important to be aware of but seldom discussed. There can also be unique challenges when athletes date non-athletes. Dr. Joannides conveys insights that athletes have shared with him over the years.
- **Protecting Athletes from Sexual Accusations.** Athletes stand out among other students and can often be a target of accusations. We will discuss situations where athletes are at high risk as well as common sense measures athletes can take to minimize their exposure and help them stay out of trouble.
- **Keeping Healthy Boundaries.** While we might wish these situations would never exist, it's an unusual program that doesn't eventually have to deal with an athlete-coach or athlete-AD-staff-member attraction or romance. If you would like, Dr. Joannides can remind your athletes about the many problems that can result from these kinds of relationships.

Focus: Injury Prevention

- **Sexually Transmitted Infections.** Being in top physical shape can create the illusion that athletes are immune to getting sexually transmitted infections. Dr. Joannides will help dispel this myth, and he will provide helpful information about ways to avoid getting STIs.
- **Pelvic Injuries that Can Bench You.** We will look at the type of pelvic injuries that coaches and athletes should be aware of, including symptoms that require immediate care.
- **Finding the Right Cup for the Right Sport and the Right Position.** Males have traditionally disliked wearing athletic cups as much as they dislike wearing motorcycle helmets and condoms. Fortunately, there are new cups that are comfortable and safe. We will cover the latest in cup technology as well as looking at how a cup that works best for a hockey forward can be different from the cup a goalkeeper, catcher, boxer or an MMA competitor needs.

- **Breast Motion and Athletic Bras.** A well-designed and well-made sports bra is an essential piece of equipment for the female athlete. We will review the results of breast motion studies and what they say about breast comfort in the female athlete. We will look at the differences between an actual sports bra and a casual popular bra, including the importance of compression, encapsulation, type of fabric, strap width and proper fit. This is especially relevant when you consider there are promising young athletes who drop out of sports due to breast pain that is exercise-related—pain that can be eliminated with a sports bra that is properly made and correctly fit.

Focus: Pelvic Issues Unique to Athletes

- **Sexual Pain in Female Athletes and Its Relation to Certain Sports.** Certain repetitive movements that stress one side of the body, such as the serve in tennis, golf strokes and throwing in track can lead to muscle contractions in the pelvis that can make intimacy uncomfortable. Long distance cycling can bring its own set of pelvic problems. Low estrogen in athletes can result in decreased lubrication, and hours in chlorinated swimming pools aren't always kind to tender tissues. Dr. Joannides will discuss ways of dealing with these and other issues that are seldom discussed but are important to your athletes.
- **Stress Urinary Incontinence Upon Landing.** While urinary leakage is one of the most common medical problems older women face, we usually don't associate it as a concern for female college athletes. However, researchers are finding that upon landing, compression in the pelvis can cause urinary leakage in young female athletes. Dr. Joannides will explain what can be done to help stop this problem which is more common than we think.
- **Steroids and Male Sexuality.** Dr. Joannides will discuss what we do and don't know about the lifelong impact that steroids such as a Deca-Sustanon stack can have on your reproductive system and sexual drive.

Focus: Birth Control Issues Unique To Athletes

- **Period Suppression, Diet and Bone Density.** Using birth control pills to suppress menstrual periods has been done for many years, but what about the impact on women who are athletes—especially those who are in sports that emphasize low body fat? Dr. Joannides will discuss what researchers do and don't know about periods and period suppression in athletes, as well as considerations about birth control that are unique to athletes. He will also discuss the latest research on the relationship between diet and maintaining proper bone density.
- **Condoms: Getting the Right Fit & Feel.** For years we have assumed that because a condom can be blown up to the size of a watermelon, one size fits all. However, blowing up an unrolled condom is a very different experience from trying to roll a condom over a watermelon. One size does not fit all. Like any piece of safety equipment, condoms will only be used voluntarily if they fit right and feel good. Dr. Joannides will offer some tips on finding a condom has the best fit and feel for an athlete's particular anatomy.

Objectives & Desired Outcomes

These are the objectives and desired outcomes for the athletes who attend this program:

1. Unique Relationship Issues

Objective: To increase athletes' awareness of the unique issues that can emerge in athlete/athlete and athlete/non-athlete romantic relationships.

Desired Outcome: Help athletes better anticipate relationship issues and deal more effectively with them when they arise.

2. Social Situations To Avoid

Objective: To increase athletes' awareness of specific social situations that can make them more vulnerable to accusations of sexual impropriety.

Desired Outcome: An understanding of steps athletes can take to keep themselves and potential partners from harm's way.

3. Sexually Transmitted Infections

Objective: To provide a better understanding of the kinds of sexually transmitted infections that athletes are vulnerable to, and ways to reduce the chances of getting them.

Desired Outcome: A reduction in sexually transmitted infections.

4. Pelvic Injuries

Objective: To help athletes know which pelvic injuries require immediate attention and to inform them about the latest in protection that can help prevent pelvic injuries.

Desired Outcome: Increased use of protection when advisable and knowing the symptoms that call for immediate medical attention.

5. Female Athlete Triad

Objective: To explain the relationship between poor diet, skipped periods, bone loss and increased rates of injury (also known as Female Athlete Triad).

Desired Outcome: That athletes understand the importance of mutually supporting each other in eating better, thus decreasing their chances of getting nutrition-related injuries.

6. Birth Control Considerations

Objective: To discuss birth control options that are available to athletes and the side effect profiles that might impact performance.

Desired Outcome: That athletes are aware of the most effective and hassle-free methods of birth control with minimal performance-impacting side effects.

7. Sports-Related Pelvic Pain

Objective: To explain how repetitive movements such as a tennis serve can result in muscle contractions along one side of the pelvis, making intimacy painful. Also, to explain that it's not abnormal for female athletes to experience some bladder leakage after certain types of landings in sports, and that there are exercises to help prevent this.

Desired Outcome: For athletes to know the symptoms of sports-related pelvic pain, and to be aware of treatment options.

8. Impact of Steroid Use on Sex Drive

Objective: To help athletes understand that steroid usage can have negative longterm effects on their sexuality.

Desired Outcome: For athletes to have another compelling reason to not use performance-enhancing drugs.

9. Preventing Breast Pain in Athletes

Objective: To explain how women with larger breasts will often quit sports at a young age because they don't know there are athletic bras that can prevent exercise-related pain, and to compare a well-made athletic bra that can prevent breast pain with a typical "sports bra" that is of little or no help.

Desired Outcome: For athletes to be knowledgeable about exercise-related breast pain and the difference a well-made athletic bra can make in a female athlete's life.

10. Sensitivity to Issues That Can Impact the Opposite Sex

Objective: To explain why it's important for athletes to be familiar with the kinds of personal issues that can affect athletes of both sexes.

Desired Outcome: That athletes are more sensitive to relationship and sex-related issues that can impact athletes who are of the opposite sex.

About the Speaker

Dr. Paul Joannides is a research psychoanalyst and author of a book on sex titled *Guide To Getting It On—6th edition*. Paul's book has received high praise in **Oprah Magazine** and **Rolling Stone**. It recently won its sixth award, being named the **Book of the Year** by the American Association of Sex Educators, Counselors and Therapists. It is used in college sex education classes all over the country and has been translated into twelve foreign languages. Paul was on the editorial board of the **American Journal of Sexuality Education** from 2006 to 2009 and writes a blog on sexuality for **Psychology Today Magazine**. While in college, Paul lived with athletes who were on full scholarships and he coached the women's champion football team at UC Berkeley. Paul lives on a small farm with his wife and daughter. *Contact: Toni Johnson at (541)563-7550.*