

Sports Physiotherapist Procedures W/M15, M25, W35, W50, W75 Tournaments

A. Prior to the Tournament

1. Complete the ITF Physiotherapy Education Module on ITF academy – available here: <https://www.itf-academy.com/index.php?academy=103&course=4116>

Please note all users will need an active ITF Academy account to be able to access the course. You can register on the ITF Academy site. This course needs to be completed every year and a valid certificate shown to the ITF Supervisor on arrival at the tournament. This module will take you through all the areas you need to be aware of to be a physiotherapist at a successful ITF event. This includes information on your roles and responsibilities as physio, tournament preparation and physio room set up, physio room and on court supplies, the medical time out rule and information regarding common tennis injuries and commonly used taping techniques in tennis.

2. Read the *ITF Guide to Recommended Health Care Standards for Tennis Tournaments* found at https://www.itftennis.com/media/1989/itf_care_guidelines_2023-english.pdf

This guide will provide additional information about Treatment Area Requirements, Medical Treatments, Nutrition, Weather Monitoring and Infection Control Guidelines.

3. Communicate with the Tournament Director and Organisers to ensure all of the requirements in the guidelines above are being followed for the tournament.
4. Order medical supplies. A list of required items is in Appendix 2 of the above guide.
5. Ensure the tournament has a sling psychrometer or wet bulb to measure the heat index each day or has a plan to attain this information from a local weather station / airport.
6. Ensure the tournament has an Automated External Defibrillator (AED).
7. Ensure the tournament has a treatment table available for each physiotherapist.
8. Get contact details for the Tournament Doctor and local ambulance service and hospital and ensure an emergency action plan is in place.
9. Speak with the Tournament Doctor and discuss when and how the Doctor will be available and the best way to communicate with them for routine appointments and in emergencies. Discuss the emergency action plan.

B. Upon Arrival at the Tournament

Upon arrival at the hotel contact the ITF Supervisor to arrange a meeting to determine the following (note: you can prearrange a meeting time via email):

1. Show the valid certificate from completing the ITF Physiotherapy Education Module
2. The match schedule and start times each day
3. How to obtain transportation to/from site each day
4. Where to pick up credentials
5. Where to locate supplies if sent to site
6. Ensure you have the Tournament Doctor's contact details and local emergencies numbers as well as directions to the hospital.

C. On site at the Tournament

1. Set up the treatment area, locate supplies, unpack, set up equipment, copy necessary paperwork and post signs (ITF specific physically speaking topics are on the ITF website, signs are available to download from the ITF Physiotherapy Education Program - print off copies before travelling). **The Sports Physio should arrive 1 hour prior to matches and should be available 30 minutes after matches.**
2. Make sure you have a good supply of clean towels, ice, water, plastic bags for ice, paper towels, soap etc., should be available in the training room each day.
3. There should be a local massage therapist (MT) available to do massage for the players. This will free you up to concentrate on treating players. If an MT is not available, then it will be necessary for you to undertake soft tissue work for injury prevention purposes.
4. Meet with the Tournament Doctor to discuss procedure for seeing athletes and discuss the emergency action plan and how it will be enacted if required.
5. ***Important: Sports Physiotherapists must not dispense any medication. Any medication brought onsite by the Tournament Doctor must be locked away when the Sport Physiotherapist/Doctor is not present in the treatment area.***
6. Meet with the Tournament Supervisor to get your walkie talkie and to determine how you will be notified for court calls.
7. Walk around the courts and familiarize yourself with the court numbering and how to access each court. Determine where an ambulance may be situated and in cases of emergency how each court can be accessed by the emergency services. It is recommended to rehearse the emergency action plan with the Tournament Doctor and Tournament Supervisor before matches start on the first day.

D. Physiotherapy Room Set Up

Set up the Physiotherapy room to enable you to move freely around the treatment beds and to have supplies and information readily accessible.

1. Taping/supplies table (lay everything out to enable you to work with a few rolls at a time – store the rest in the box under the table). **No medications should be given.**
2. Treatment beds – ensure a clean treatment bed is available for each physiotherapist, preferably high-low bed (electric or hydraulic) in good working condition.
3. Make sure you have a good supply of clean towels, ice, water, plastic bags for ice, paper towels, soap etc., should be available in the training room each day.
4. Desk with lockable drawer, if possible, to facilitate greeting of players on entry to room.
5. Internet with high-speed access if possible.
6. Phone numbers for doctor, emergency services etc. and relevant off-site numbers.
7. Ice – have an ice box/freezer with ice bags close to training room and/or within view – enabling you to check players who are icing, but who haven't asked for treatment.

E. Prioritising

1. **Medical emergencies and court calls take priority over all treatments.** In all other cases, players must be treated on a “first come, first served” basis, subject to:
 - a. players getting ready for matches have priority over players waiting for regular treatment, rehabilitation or cool-down;
 - b. players who have lost in the tournament may be treated, but only after the needs of players still in the tournament have been met.
2. Speak to all players entering the treatment room and find out their needs so you can prioritise. Reassure players required to wait that you will help them in due course.
3. On Finals day, your priority is the players competing on that day. You will be required to sit courtside during the singles and doubles finals. Arrive two hours in advance of the first final to attend to the players needs and to pack up remaining supplies.

F. Interpersonal Communication

1. All Sport Physiotherapists are expected to maintain the highest level of professionalism:
 - a. Continuing Professional Development up to date
 - b. Membership of professional associations
 - c. Insurance cover of adequate level for elite athletes
 - d. No request for photographs or autographs from players
 - e. Maintain player-therapist confidentiality
 - f. Gratuities may not be accepted
2. On arriving at the site and before leaving the site each day, please check with the ITF Supervisor and Tournament Director to see if they have any questions (however do not break player medical confidentiality at any time).
3. Please print off the players treatment plan (SOAP) note for them to give to their next therapist if going to their next ITF or WTA/ ATP event or home for ongoing care.

G. Breaks

Each Sport Physiotherapist is entitled to a 30 min break for lunch and dinner, to be taken at a time determined appropriate by the Sport Physiotherapist. When taking a break, place a sign on the door to inform players where you are and do not leave the site. You should also notify the Tournament Supervisor when you are taking a break. Breaks should not be taken within the first hour of the working day.

If you are the only physiotherapist, please make sure you have your walkie talkie with you and your court kit so you can respond to court calls during your break. Please be flexible to the needs of the players – thank you.

H. Documentation

IMPORTANT – Ensure daily treatment log sheets are filled out with **ALL** treatment and advice given duly recorded.

I. Hydration

Hang signs for hydration and Sports Drink close together within the Physiotherapy room.

J. Therex Area

If you are fortunate enough to have a large treatment room/adjoining area, we encourage you to set up a wobble cushion, theraband, foam roller, Swiss ball, etc., for use by players if you have them available.

K. Signs

ITF information signs and leaflets are available on the ITF website and within the ITF Physiotherapy Education Program. Please familiarize yourself with them so that you can refer players to them as required. Please print off and hang signs that are more relevant to your tournament such as Heat and Altitude related topics.

<https://www.itftennis.com/en/about-us/tennis-tech/science-and-medicine/>

L. Court Preparation

Courts should have:

- a) Individually sealed containers of bottled water, supplied in coolers
- b) Ice and Ice bags kept in coolers
- c) Towels
- d) Individually sealed container Sports drinks (Anti-Doping safe) may be provided by tournament or available to purchase at the tournament.
- e) Umbrellas to provide on court shade

It is our job to remind tournament staff to set courts up correctly. Spot checks are advisable!

M. Wet-bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT) Calculations

To conform to the Extreme Weather Regulation (Appendix F) of the ITF World Tennis Tour Regulations, the tournament must have a temperature and humidity recording device (e.g. sling psychrometer) to measure the Heat Index. A Heat Stress Meter is the preferred method of measuring Wet Bulb Globe Temperature (WBGT).

Typically, there is a sunlight exposure setting on the device which should be selected depending on whether the measurement is taken in direct sunlight or in the shade. The device should be held/mounted approximately 1 m above the ground and allowed to acclimatise for 2-3 minutes before the measurement is recorded. Alternatively, there must be access to the local airport weather report, and the Heat Index can be determined from the Heat Index Chart (see Appendix 1).

Open the following link then add it to your favourites so you can use it to calculate the WBGT. It will tell you if the rule is in or out. http://www.zunis.org/WTA/WTA_SP_F.htm

Please be careful when entering the data to the heat readings form. Enter the dry temperature taken from the dry bulb, the humidity which is the % number on the calculator (not the wet thermometer) then the WBGT from the calculator, the weather cloud cover are entered into the calculator, then if the heat rule is IN or OUT, then lastly if there were any heat illness cases during this time.

The Heat readings form can be downloaded from the ITF Physiotherapy Education Program.

N. Anti-Doping

Sports Physios MUST NOT provide medication to players and must not advise on Antidoping Questions. Players that have questions about Anti-Doping should be directed to go to the ITIA website. <https://www.itia.tennis/tadp/>

Tournament Doctors should be aware of the prohibited list before prescribing any medication to a player. Players should be encouraged to download the ITIA Anti-Doping app.