

The Editors' Musings

DR TINA TAN

Editor

Dr Tan is a psychiatrist in private practice and an alumnus of Duke-NUS Medical School. She treats mental health conditions in all age groups but has a special interest in caring for the elderly. With a love for the written word, she makes time for reading, writing and self-publishing on top of caring for her patients and loved ones.



Ever watched the Ultimate Fighting Championship? My husband is a big fan and when he streams his matches (and screams at them), I often catch glimpses of fighters being examined by medics after a blow to the head, or even pulled out on stretchers with braces around their necks. I can only imagine that being medical personnel in such events can be both highly entertaining and highly stressful.

This month, we wrap up the year by delving into a rather niche area, which is that of sports medicine. Specifically, medical coverage of sporting events. Our informative and eye-opening Feature article is a must-read, as Adj A/Prof Kelvin Chew and Clinical Asst Prof Ivy Lim write

about the experience of travelling as part of a medical team to support athletes at major games, the amount of preparation work it takes, and what it is like on-duty. If you think it is relaxing to just be on "standby" (the way the lifeguard is on standby at the Olympics' swimming events), then guess again.

Likewise, medical student Chia Xin Yi's contribution is a nice addition, as she writes about why she decided to start a Medicine Special Interest Group, with a focus on sports medicine for young athletes and the types of injuries that they sustain as part of their training.

Happy reading and happy holidays.

DR JIMMY TEO

Guest Editor

Dr Teo is an associate professor in the Department of Medicine, NUS Yong Loo Lin School of Medicine, and senior consultant in the Division of Nephrology at National University Hospital. He is an active member of the Singapore Society of Nephrology.



It is alarming to read from recent health surveys and reports that our country has high rates of obesity, hypertension and diabetes. A sedentary lifestyle compounds these problems and leads to many significant complications with reduced healthy longevity. By encouraging active lifestyles and participation in sports, we can improve our population health.

It may not always be apparent that sports medicine is a specialty, but there are many aspects of medical care that need to be rendered to participants in sports activities. Sports medicine doctors can review the health status of participants prior to vigorous activity. They also provide direct medical support during competitive sports events. Sometimes, vigorous sports activities may result in injuries that can be better treated or managed when we engage sports medicine doctors.

A healthier Singapore requires a whole-of-population engagement in healthier living

by reducing intake of foods detrimental to health, such as trans fats, excessive sodium salt, sugar, refined carbohydrates and calories. Beyond nutritional adjustments, we also need to change our way of life to incorporate more physical activity. We can do this through active participation in group sports and individual physical exercise over a lifetime. Non-competitive group sports can also increase social interaction and improve mental health. But it is inevitable that increasing vigorous physical exercise may result in injuries, and it is important that such patients be promptly attended to, treated and undergo appropriate rehabilitation.

In this issue of the newsletter, we feature articles on the role of sports medicine doctors. However, safe active lives for everyone involves **everyone**.

Wishing all our readers and all of Singapore a healthy and safe Christmas and new year ahead. ♦