



Healthy Athletes

Special Olympics
Ontario



www.specialolympicsontario.com

Dear Special Olympics Supporter,

The Special Olympics **Healthy Athletes** program is designed to address the unique challenges that face many people with intellectual disabilities surrounding health care and communicating their health needs. The issue is twofold: first, many individuals with intellectual disabilities have trouble realizing or expressing their health concerns; second, many health professionals have not had the opportunity to receive specific training, and/or are unfamiliar with the specific challenges facing our population.

International Special Olympics research has indicated that people with intellectual disabilities have a 40 per cent greater risk for health issues than the general population and that only one in 50 primary care physicians have received clinical training that qualifies them to treat people with intellectual disabilities. The professionals who lead Healthy Athletes screenings have received specific training to help them ask the right questions, identify the specific concerns of Special Olympics athletes and make appropriate referrals directing athletes toward avenues for treatment and ongoing care.

Many athletes and caregivers have been surprised to participate in a Healthy Athletes screening and discover health issues that have gone undiagnosed through regular health channels. SOO is working hard to improve athlete health initiatives such as the Healthy Athletes screenings because we know that if we can encourage individuals with an intellectual disability to become healthier, their personal health burden will decrease, and their physical abilities, athletic performances and overall quality of life will improve. Screenings are offered across Ontario throughout the year. For more information or to express interest in a healthy athletes screening, please contact us. **We hope to see you at our next Healthy Athletes screening!**



Contact us for general inquiries about our Healthy Athletes program or how to get involved!

Brock Reissner, Manager: Health & Research Initiatives

Tel: [416\) 447-8326 ext 249](tel:4164478326)

Email: brockr@specialolympicsontario.com



Special Olympics
Special Smiles®



Special Smiles provides comprehensive oral health care information, including offering free dental screenings and instructions on correct brushing and flossing techniques to participating Special Olympics athletes. This also includes issuing preventative supplies like toothpaste and toothbrushes and fluoride varnish.



Special Olympics
Healthy Hearing



The Healthy Hearing program serves as a global audiological screening, care, and referral program for our athletes. Led by volunteer professionals, Healthy Hearing also provides tests for cerumen (ear wax) and otoacoustic emissions tests. The amount of hearing loss among Special Olympics athletes is much greater than amongst the general population, as most hearing problems are previously undetected or un-served.



Special Olympics
FUNfitness



Designed to assess and improve an athlete's flexibility, functional strength, aerobic capacity and balance, FUNfitness screenings both educate and provide hands-on opportunities for participants to learn about physical therapy and fitness. Athletes learn techniques to improve flexibility, functional strength, balance and aerobic condition for sports



Special Olympics
Health Promotion



Health Promotion uses interactive educational tools and displays, motivational literature and demonstrations to heighten the awareness of athletes, reinforcing the need to improve and maintain an enhanced level of wellness and self-care. Its goals are to encourage and enhance healthy behaviors; reduce risky behaviors; improve self-efficacy and self-advocacy; and increase the investment of health promotion leaders for people with intellectual disabilities.



Special Olympics
MedFest®



Led by volunteer physicians, nurses, physician assistants, and medical students, the MedFest screening consists of the following stations: medical history, height and weight, blood pressure, cardiology test, musculoskeletal test, orthopedic tests, abdominal evaluation, and a check out station.



Special Olympics
Fit Feet



Fit Feet helps Special Olympics athletes step lively on the playing field, and in everyday life. Up to 50 percent of Special Olympics athletes experience one or more preventable or treatable foot conditions that can affect their sports participation. Often, these individuals are not fitted with the best shoes and socks for their particular sport. To alleviate these problems, volunteer podiatrists work with athletes to evaluate problems of the feet, ankles and lower extremity biomechanics.



Special Olympics
Lions Clubs International
Opening Eyes®



The Special Olympics-Lions Clubs International Opening Eyes program is a vision and eye health screening in partnership with the Lions Clubs International Foundation. Led by volunteer vision care professionals, Opening Eyes is able to offer prescription eyewear, sunglasses, and sports goggles to Special Olympics athletes.



Canada 



 Ontario