

Special Olympics Healthy Athletes MedFest



Special Olympics
Health
FOUNDATION
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Over 900,000 Special Olympics athletes participate in games and events organized by Special Olympics each year in the United States. But before they step on the playing field, they are required to have a comprehensive sports physical. MedFest was created to offer the physical exam that all athletes need prior to participating in Special Olympics sports. Screenings assess blood pressure, temperature, pulse, height, weight, body mass index, vision, hearing, medical history, potential medication side effects and general physical health. It is sometimes the first exposure these athletes have to medical care. In many cases, life-threatening conditions have been found and subsequently treated thanks to MedFest.

MedFest is a highly flexible program that can occur by itself, or in conjunction with other Healthy Athletes disciplines.

Importance and Impact

- **90%** of primary care residency programs in the U.S. offer no training in caring for people with intellectual disabilities
- **81%** of graduating medical students in the U.S. report not having any training in the care of people with intellectual disabilities
- **74%** of adult Special Olympics athletes are overweight or obese
- **50%** of Special Olympics athletes under the age of 20 are overweight or obese

CONTACT

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Purpose of the Screening:

MedFest screenings have found that a large percentage of Special Olympics athletes have significant health concerns that are preventable and/or treatable. The goals of MedFest include:

- Offer a free sports physical and other health examination services to people with intellectual disabilities.
- Recruit new athletes to Special Olympics.
- Foster new partnerships between Special Olympics and the community. Provide physicians, nurses and other health care providers with training and specialized experience in the caring for people with intellectual disabilities.

