

Urgent Care Marketing 101: Attract Patients through Sports Physicals



Spring is the perfect time to consider the marketing value of school physicals partnerships for your urgent care center.

Schools, and the associated athletic programs, present vast opportunities for urgent care providers to grow their patient networks through: vaccinations and physicals for enrollment or sports involvement; health/wellness fairs; flu shot campaigns; sponsorship of auxiliary organizations; and occupational medicine for employees.

During the spring months, providers should reach out to school officials and athletic directors to introduce and discuss partnership opportunities. The target audience will be schools within a few miles of your urgent care center, where good access is available. Consider scheduling meetings with the principal or administrator, school nurse, and athletic director.

Look at the ways you could benefit from establishing a relationship with the school's athletics program. Drawing students (and their parents) in for sports physicals familiarizes your facility. For a family with four kids, that could translate to several sports physicals every year during a 10-12 year period. It adds up to a lot of incremental revenue and patient loyalty.

The urgent care center may then be top of mind for families, coaches, and trainers later when they need afterhours care for injuries or an illness. And as the students graduate, the urgent care center will be a known entity to them for care during their 20s and 30s—and you've potentially built a lifetime patient.

This type of consumer outreach is more targeted to your surrounding area and less expensive than mass advertising. It spurs word of mouth and could lead to free media exposure.

[Read more here](#) about tactics for marketing to area businesses.

So, what's the best strategy? Once you've connected with school officials, do your homework on competitive prices for your sports-related services relative to others in the marketplace. The price point for a sports physical will be lower, but remember that if the urgent care center isn't operating at full capacity during that time of year (the summer months), you're not really losing money by bringing these extra feet through the door for a low-acuity service.

One caution: Don't offer sports physicals FREE as a promotion. This approach can backfire as parents and other school consumers brand the urgent care as the "free clinic" and potentially link it to poor quality.

But you should consider running sports physical promotion, and encourage the athletic director to pass along flyers to the coaches and players. One idea is to offer a “coupon” on the flyers, redeemable for \$5 donated back to the school’s athletic department, for example. This will build brand affinity toward the center. Plus, you can arrange a check presentation at a sporting event and invite local media.

Check back all this month for marketing tips and strategies we’re offering for Urgent Care Awareness Month. And send any specific marketing questions or topics you’d like to see addressed to dwallheimer@practicevelocity.com.

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