Looking back on Rio: UHealth Sports Medicine physicians provide medical care at 2016 Olympics

The numbers are staggering – 36 competition and 20 training venues, six hotels, five media villages, one hospital, 306 events, 10,903 athletes, 3,200 referees and assistants, 45,000 volunteers, 25,100 accredited media, 7,000 National Olympic Committee delegates, 5,000 clinicians, 1,000 doctors...and one man responsible for it all.

Antonio Marttos, M.D., a trauma surgeon at UHealth, was the manager of emergency medical services and MCI response for the 2016 Olympics in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. He was given the monumental task of ensuring that everyone attending the Olympics received the highest level of medical care.

Among the physicians providing that care in Rio were our own Dr. Lee Kaplan, Chief of UHealth Sports Medicine, and Dr. Carolyn Kienstra, Pediatric Sports Medicine Physician. In addition, UHealth Sports Medicine is the official medical provider for the US Sailing Team year-round.

From left, UHealth physicians Carolyn Kienstra, M.D., Sheila Conway, M.D., Antonio Marttos, M.D., Gird Pust, M.D., and Lee Kaplan, M.D., at Rio Olympic Arena.
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Dr. Lee Kaplan and Dr. Carolyn Kienstra of UHealth Sports Medicine returned from Rio with unforgettable memories and stories of amazing medical accomplishments.

First to arrive back in Miami was Lee Kaplan, M.D., head of UHealth Sports Medicine. Kaplan worked with trauma surgeon Antonio Marttos, M.D., to coordinate which UHealth doctors would take part in the games.

“Rio 2016 was definitely a highlight of my career,” said Kaplan, “not only because of the number of ways in which we were able to help treat the athletes, but also because of the Olympic experience.”

Kaplan and his colleagues arrived three days before the games started. After getting their credentials, participating in a medical volunteer orientation led by Marttos and settling into their residence near the Olympic Village, Kaplan was able to visit a number of the competition venues and provide medical care to the athletes who were already doing structured practice rounds with judges observing. He also took part in the Opening Ceremony from the floor of the event.

“The Opening Ceremony was unlike anything I’ve ever attended,” Kaplan said. “To be able to share the thrill of it, surrounded by the greatest athletes in the world and next to my UHealth colleagues, made it all the more special.”

The next day, it was back to work, as men’s gymnastics got under way. But the start of competition was marred by a severe leg injury to one of the gymnasts. Kaplan was one of the first to reach the patient’s side and stabilized the leg.

“Moments like that drive home why we do what we do,” Kaplan said. “While it’s amazing to celebrate and be a part of something as special as the Olympics, and certainly you can’t help but feel patriotic as you see some of the greatest athletes in United States history, like Michael Phelps, walk by, it was the chance to make a difference in the life of an athlete whose Olympic dreams have been shattered that made my time in Rio so great.”

Kaplan was also impressed with the professionalism of his UHealth colleagues, as many worked beside him at men’s and women’s gymnastics.

“We have a very special and expert team of physicians at UHealth,” he said. “There is a reason that athletes from around the world come to us in Miami for medical advice, and it’s no surprise we were invited to volunteer at an event as prestigious as the Olympics. We were very well prepared and did what we had been trained to do. I’m so proud that the rest of the world’s medical community got to see that in Rio.”
Concussion safety: A parent’s guide to the fall sports season

BY GILLIAN HOTZ, PH.D.

Football season has kicked off, and Friday night lights are shining for parents around the nation. Unfortunately, with football comes injuries, and the most common injuries discussed today are concussions. Even if your child doesn’t play football but is involved in another sport, you should know the definition of a concussion and what this means for your child.

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the body, with a force transmitted to the head, causing an injury to the brain. Because kids are not fully physically developed, having thinner skulls and weaker neck muscles, they are more susceptible to concussions.

Concussions have been estimated to account for 9 percent of all high school athletic injuries. However, it is estimated that 50 percent to 75 percent of concussions among high school athletes go unreported. What is most alarming in youth sports is that those 13 and younger are more likely to receive a concussion, and most of those are not reported.

Before your children get involved in sports, it’s important that you and your kids are properly educated and know what to do if a concussion is suspected. This should start with a checklist of the basics:

- Does your child know how to recognize and report a suspected head injury?
- Does your child know how to express a head injury to a coach, parent or teammate?
- Does your child’s team or league have a concussion protocol?
- What type of physician (neurologist, family medicine or pediatrician) would you take your child to for the evaluation and treatment of a concussion?

Once your child has started playing, become vigilant about head injuries. If you suspect your child has suffered a hit to the head, watch for these common symptoms of a concussion:

- Headaches.
- Confusion or the feeling of being “in a fog.”
- Dizziness or balance problems.
- Fatigue or drowsiness.
- Nausea and/or vomiting.
- Sensitivity to light and noise.
- Irritability or nervousness.
- Trouble concentrating.

If you think your child or adolescent has a concussion, there are a number of dos and don’ts to follow:

- Do stop playing – immediately!
- Do tell a coach, athletic trainer, teammate, friend or parent.
- Do consult a physician.
- Do keep hydrated.
- Do get some rest.
- Don’t continue playing.
- Don’t return to sports activities without medical clearance.
- Don’t consume alcohol.
- Don’t drive.

The nation’s growing awareness of concussions in the last decade has helped pass legislation to improve the treatment and management of concussions, especially in young athletes. State law requires parents, coaches, athletic trainers and, in some states, athletes to provide education about the symptoms and risks of a concussion. During athletic events, an athlete exhibiting concussive symptoms must be immediately taken out of play and is not allowed to return until they have received clearance from a medical professional.

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(Continued from page 3.) BY GILLIAN HOTZ, PH.D.

As a result of legislation and research findings, the “6 Steps to Safe Play” were developed. Of particular significance are the tests now available to test your child’s brain function before and after injury. If your teen participates in a school sport, the following “6 Steps to Safe Play” are recommended:

1. Your child should have a preseason baseline, which is completed with ImPACT, a neurocognitive computerized test for kids 13 and older.
2. Sideline testing with SCAT 3, King Devick or BESS should be available.
3. If your child is injured while playing, he or she should be re-tested with ImPACT.
4. If concussion symptoms and ImPACT indicate a possible concussion, immediately seek medical treatment at a concussion clinic.
5. Once cleared by the doctor, your child can return to play and return to learn.
6. The team’s athletic trainers should have access to the Concussion Injury Surveillance System, a tool used to track concussions.

If a concussion is left untreated or an athlete sustains multiple concussions, your child could suffer permanent brain injury. The inherent competitive nature of sports and culture to win at all costs may sometimes overshadow the need to call attention to reporting injuries. As a coach, parent, athlete and even a fan, we must encourage the reporting of head injuries within the sports culture. An athlete’s awareness of the signs, symptoms, and effects of a concussion can only improve the safety of our athletes. Educating all parties, particularly our youth athletes, has shown to increase concussion awareness and reporting, making it a vital component of sports safety this school year.

For more information, visit UConcussion.com.

Gillian Hotz, Ph.D., is the director of the Kidz Neuroscience Center at UHealth – the University of Miami Health System.

UHealth Coral Gables opening December 2016!

Located on the University of Miami Coral Gables campus, the Lennar Foundation Medical Center will be the new home of UHealth Sports Medicine as of December 2016!

The University of Miami Health System is building a 200,000-square-foot ambulatory center on the University’s Coral Gables campus that will provide easy access to UHealth’s leading physicians for students, faculty, staff and surrounding communities.

The Lennar Foundation Medical Center will deliver premier services of the Miller School of Medicine, including specialty care by the renowned Sylvester Comprehensive Cancer Center and Bascom Palmer Eye Institute, ranked the No. 1 eye hospital in the nation for 15 years! The facility will also include urgent care, out-patient surgery, men’s and women’s health, physical therapy, diagnostic imaging, radiation oncology and other UHealth subspecialties.