



By Leslie Morgan

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What with the World Cup Finals, Wimbledon and the Open Championship Golf, I've really enjoyed watching some wonderful sporting events this summer. And even though there are still two years to go until London 2012, you can already feel an 'Olympic' buzz in the city.

Sport also plays a part in my professional life, and in recent years I've noticed that Durbin has been steadily increasing the amount of business it does with sporting associations and clubs. Not so very long ago, injuries 'on the field' were commonly treated with little more than cold water and a sponge. These days, thank goodness, things are changing, and the health and well-being of athletes is taken much more seriously – indeed, their bodies are treated more like finely tuned machines. At professional level, it is not uncommon for

Fine-tuning the drug regimens for athletes

a team of medical staff to be employed to provide round-the-clock, state-of-the-art attention to prevent, diagnose, treat and rehabilitate sports injuries. This means that these highly trained individuals are given the best chance possible to stay at the peak of their fitness.

Medical professionals attached to sports clubs (either full or part time) will often include doctors, physiotherapists, osteopaths, nutritionists, masseurs, and in some cases, surgeons. When all is said and done however an inventory of the most commonly requested items doesn't throw up too many surprises. On the equipment side, vibro massage machines and electro therapy systems feature highly. Pharmaceutical lists are dominated by a range of treatments for low level or short term problems such as pain killers and anti-inflammatory gels for muscle problems, and oral rehydration therapies for dehydration. General first aid supplies including tapes and strapping are also common, as are requests for oxygen. In our experience the key requirements placed on a supplier are to be able to provide high quality products and a speedy, reliable service. The quantities requested are generally not that large, but, in the fast paced environment of sport, medical staff often need items at very short notice.

Of course, unlike other medical professionals, those looking after athletes also have another hugely important consideration to bear in mind. Due to the rigorous drug testing that, quite rightly in my opinion, takes place in the sporting world today, medical doctors have to be certain that the medicines they prescribe are 100% pure. Substances banned include anabolic steroids, peptide hormones, strong analgesic painkillers,

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stimulants, diuretics and there are also restrictions on the use of various medicines, including local anaesthetics and drugs used to treat medical conditions such as asthma (cortico-steroids) and hypertension (beta-blockers). A single mistake could result in the end of a career – so the stakes are extremely high. Naturally therefore, sports medical professionals keep up to date with guidelines set by the World Anti-Doping Agency (WADA) and are ultra careful to order and prescribe drugs that don't contain banned substances. This approach only works however, if they can place total trust in their suppliers, who in turn need to trust their own sources 100% as well. And that's where we come in. Because we've been sourcing medicines from over 70 countries for more than 40 years, we can guarantee reliable sources for total peace of mind.

Ultimately, our job is to help sports medicine professionals help the athletes in their care achieve peak performance without breaking the rules. And I like to think that even from behind my desk I'm doing my little bit to contribute to sporting greatness. **MEH**

Durbin PLC is a British company based in South Harrow, London. Established in 1963, the company specialises in supplying quality assured pharmaceuticals, medical equipment and consumable supplies to healthcare professionals and aid agencies in over 180 countries. As well as reacting rapidly to emergency situations, Durbin PLC responds to healthcare supply needs from local project level to national scale programmes.

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