

# Editor's comment

## The pursuit of excellence



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This issue of *CME* is devoted to sports science. We have had previous issues of the journal that have covered sports injuries, but the approach here is a little different and fairly academic. For those of you who look for a clinical approach to all topics in *CME*, I apologise. However, I am sure that everyone will get an enormous amount of information and enjoyment out of a journal that is filled with well-written, well-researched and up-to-date information.

For many of you in practice, exercise will be a necessary part of your prescription – for chronic illness prevention, for rehabilitation after cardiac events and just to generally increase the health of your patients. Recent research suggests that carrying on regular aerobic exercise through middle age can add about 12 years of quality life and actively reduce the side-effects of ageing through better oxidation of the tissues, cleaning up free radicals and so on. People are always

more responsive to advice if they feel that this advice is well-informed – and what better way to inform your patients on the benefits of exercise than by understanding the physiology behind the process.

Then there are those who deal with athletes – and believe me there are lots out there. Just looking at the number of people who run Comrades and cycle the Argus every year shows that many, many people are now engaging in regular endurance exercise. There are 10 km, 15 km and 21 km running races nearly every weekend near major centres, and there are an increasing number of marathons available as well. This is on top of cycling races, triathlons and adventure racing. All of you who practise in cities will have patients who are weekend (and early-morning) athletes, and the topics in this issue of the journal will be of great interest to them. There are far too few people who are able to give advice on the dangers of taking non-steroidal anti-inflammatories

during or after exercise, for example – or who know that they should only be taken for 3 days after an acute, inflammatory injury. Because I am a doctor, many of the people with whom I run ask me why they get tired when they run, even though they are well trained and performing well. There is always the fear that there is some underlying pathology. So the information about fatigue in the respiratory muscles is invaluable.

Exercise and participation in sports is increasingly being recognised as an essential part of maintaining good health and preventing the illness of lifestyle. This issue of the journal should stimulate an interest in sports science and provide the background knowledge to help encourage your patients to participate actively in sports – and not just increase their waistlines by sitting on the couch watching Comrades each year.

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