

TREATING THE UNCONVENTIONAL ATHLETE

The Center for Performing Arts Medicine (CPAM) encompasses the expertise of more than 100 physicians with specialized knowledge and skills who provide integrated care to the particular needs of performing artists.

Working with a research-driven team to provide specialized care to professional performing artists, Evan Collins, MD, orthopedic surgeon and vice chair of CPAM, speaks nationally on the repetitive stress injuries and conditions frequently experienced by musicians and the need for protocols specific to this unique population. Dedicated to this effort, Collins and CPAM work in collaboration with the Shepherd School of Music at Rice University on an original research project. The study focuses on mechanical and biological impact, the role of “capacity” in repetitive stress, and overuse injuries and conditions musicians experience over the course of their long career.

The study is an extension of a recently completed paper Collins co-authored with colleagues; *Effective Hand & Upper Extremity Treatments for Performing Artists and Musicians: Identifying Evidence Based Research*. The goal of the study is to establish evidence-based protocols and a “gold standard” level of care for a unique type of “athlete” currently not represented in sports medicine protocols developed for “traditional athletes.” This data will support development of early training programs and preventive care integral for the lifelong careers of musicians and broader performing artist population. It will also contribute to a global database and translate into a higher standard of care and universal protocol for non-musician patients experiencing similar tendinopathic and repetitive stress conditions.

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