

## THE HEALTH SOURCE

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# A team approach

## Marshall University group offers comprehensive sports medicine services

A good sports team has a number of qualities: Experience, cooperation, skill and training.

A strong sports medicine team shares those qualities. The Sports Medicine program of the Marshall University Family Practice group has, over many years, built a team of physicians and health professionals to meet the sports medicine needs of the Tri-State community.

The team recently added a new player, orthopedic sports medicine specialist Charles Giangarra, M.D. The addition of Dr. Giangarra rounds out Marshall University's primary care sports medicine offerings to include specialized surgical treatment, when necessary, for sports injuries.

### A history of sports medicine

Long-time Marshall University team physician Jose Ricard, M.D., built a vision to improve the quality of sport medicine care for people in the Tri-State area, said Ross Patton, M.D., now co-medical director of the Marshall University Medical Center's sports medicine program.

That vision included enhancing sports medicine education, providing top-quality sports-related medical services and reaching out to the community, Dr. Patton said. Over the past two decades, the group has advanced to reach those visions.

"One of the first things we did was establish a fellowship in primary care sports medicine," Dr. Patton said. "It started in 1988, and we train one physician fellow per year."

These fellows complete an additional year of sports medicine training after a family practice residency, Dr. Patton said. Graduates of the fellowship now run sports medicine programs in many parts of the U.S., including Florida, Chicago and New Mexico, he said.

Also in the area of sports medicine education, Marshall each year sponsors and hosts the West Virginia family practice and sports medicine weekend conference in November.

"It addresses general family practice, but includes a day of sports medicine," Dr. Patton said. "We've done this for the past 16 years. It's usually attended by more than 400 physicians."

Over the years, the number of physicians with special interest in sports medicine within the Marshall University family practice group has increased to seven, Dr. Patton said.

"Three of us in the department have certificates of added qualification in primary care sports medicine," he said. "To achieve this, a physician must have practiced for a number of years in sports medicine and take a special exam."

The Marshall physicians provide care through a sports medicine clinic to a variety of patients with a variety of issues.

"We take care of a wide range of patients with exercise-related conditions and injuries," Dr. Patton said. "We evaluate patients and offer non-operative care, which constitutes 90 percent to 95 percent of sports medicine."

Patients include "weekend warrior" athletes, more elite and school-based athletes, and people who want to start or improve an exercise program.

"In keeping with the concept of family practice, we provide care to patients of all ages, including pediatric sports medicine," Dr. Patton said.

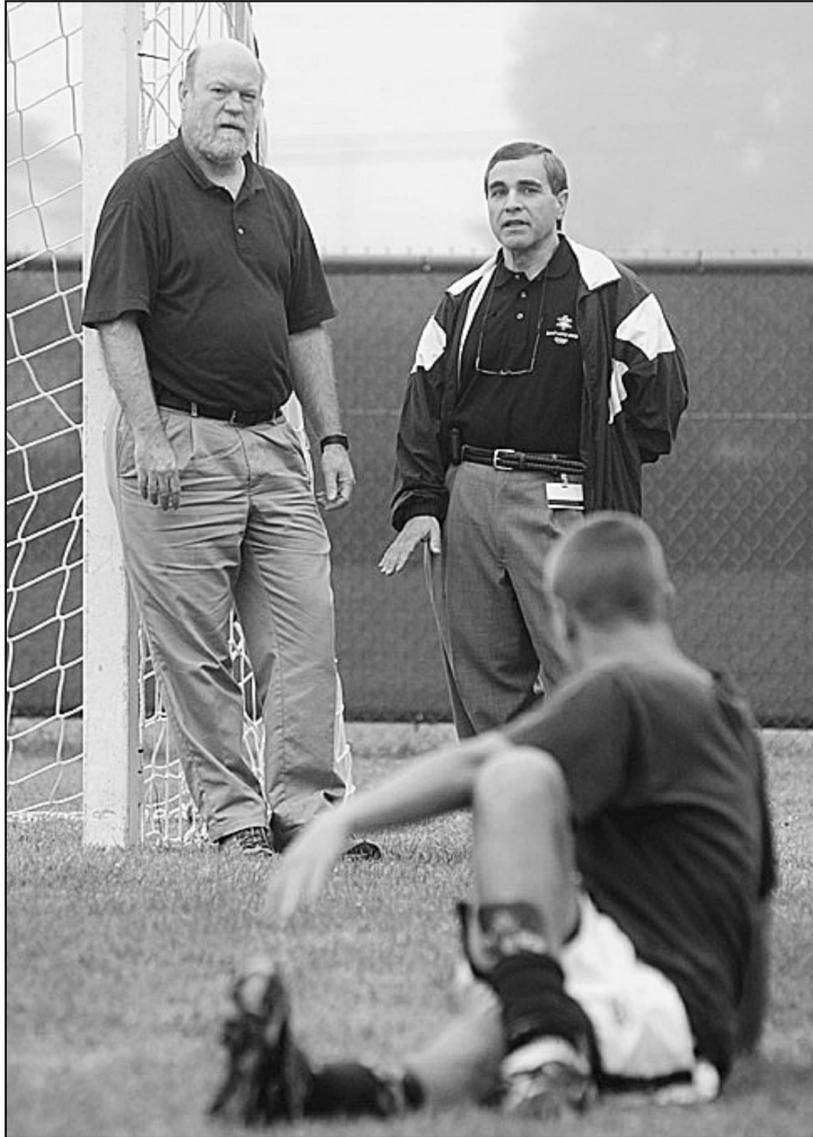
Improving sports medicine means reaching out to the community, as well.

"We provide care for the two high schools in Cabell County," he said. "Graduates of our program also provide care at Spring Valley and Wayne high schools."

"We've also been involved with the Marshall University athletic department," he said. "Dr. Ricard has been the head team physician for 22 years, and our sports medicine fellows are very involved in providing care in that setting, as well."

In addition, the group provides care for local sporting events, including the Chevy Cup in youth soccer and the state wrestling tournament.

"We're involved in all kinds of activities," Dr. Patton said. "We also go out and give talks to outlying hospitals on sports medicine issues, and we provide medical support for Cabell Huntington Hospital's human performance lab, diabetes exercise program and cardiac rehab. Those are some of the ways we've tried to impact the community."



Ross Patton, M.D., and Charles Giangarra, M.D., of the Department of Sports Medicine at Marshall University observe players at a recent practice of the Marshall men's soccer team.

### Addition of orthopedics

The Marshall University sports medicine increased its scope recently with the addition of Dr. Giangarra, an orthopedic surgeon with extensive training and experience in sports medicine. The New York City native's resume includes fellowship training under two of sports medicine's founding fathers and working with professional and Olympic-level athletes.

"I'm fortunate to be here with the Department of Sports Medicine they have here at Marshall — to be a member of a well-noted, established and highly skilled team of physicians," Dr. Giangarra said.

Dr. Giangarra's experience and skill as a surgeon will benefit patients with sports injuries

requiring surgical treatment, Dr. Patton said. Dr. Giangarra has special interest in arthroscopic management of injuries to the joints most often affected by sports injuries, namely the elbow, shoulder, knee and ankle.

Arthroscopic surgery, which involves using a special scope and instruments to access and repair joints without a large incision, has advanced dramatically over the past 20 to 25 years, Dr. Giangarra said.

"I can remember as recently as the early 80s, when the arthroscope was a new tool, that a surgeon would place the scope in someone's knee to make a diagnosis of a cartilage tear, then pull the scope out and open up the knee to take out the cartilage," he said. "Now, arthroscopic instru-

ments and surgery have revolutionized orthopedics and sports medicine."

Though not every patient's injury can be treated arthroscopically, those treated this way receive many benefits, including shorter recovery time and less severe pain, he said.

Arthroscopic surgery techniques continue to evolve, Dr. Giangarra said, including improving the ability to use arthroscopy on shoulder injuries.

"We're not quite at the same stage with the shoulder as we are with the knee," he said. "We've got a good handle arthroscopically on the pathology in the knee and how to treat it. We're still learning. It seems that every month or even every week, there's something new out there,

another technique to use on the shoulder."

Dr. Giangarra's practice, while focused on sports-related injuries, also can benefit everyday patients with similar injuries.

"In athletes we often see an injury called a torn anterior cruciate ligament," he said. "Well, you can step off a stair in your house and tear your ACL. The subsequent instability can lead to disability and can affect your ability to work, or even walk normally. This is something that we treat on a regular basis in sports medicine, and we can also help a non-athlete recover more quickly, more efficiently and with a more stable knee."

Dr. Giangarra's surgical expertise complements the primary care sports medicine already available through Marshall University Medical Center.

"I feel like I can best serve this community and this university by my experience and expertise with the arthroscopic management of those joints and injuries to those joints," he said.

### Comprehensive sports medicine care

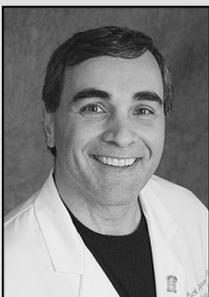
Sports medicine depends on a team, which includes the primary care physician, a surgeon, athletic trainers and physical therapists, as well as the patient.

"There's a commitment made by this team, this group of people who are dedicated to the best recovery possible," Dr. Giangarra said. "When you get those groups working together, you can't help but get good results."

The sports medicine department at Marshall University, with Dr. Giangarra joining the team, now offers a complete package of sports medicine, Dr. Patton said.

"We've been doing non-operative sports medicine for years, and the program has continued to expand under Dr. Ricard's leadership," he said. "With this expansion of our sports medicine team, we can now offer operative care as well. It's a comprehensive package, and we're very excited about where we're going."

For more information or to make an appointment, you can contact the primary care sports medicine clinic at Marshall University Medical Center at (304) 691-1100. Dr. Giangarra's office can be reached by calling (304) 691-1200.



### Charles Giangarra, M.D.

Dr. Giangarra brings a wealth of sports medicine training and experience to Marshall University. He sees patients by appointment at the Surgery Department of Marshall University Medical Center (304-691-1200). His background includes:

- Medical school and orthopedics residency in New York
- Fellowship in Los Angeles under the direction of Dr. Frank Jobe and Dr. Robert Kerlan, two of the most well-known sports medicine specialists in the country. Dr. Jobe is famous in sports medicine circles for developing the "Tommy John Procedure," which treats a common injury seen in baseball players by reconstructing the ligament on the inside part of the elbow. Dr. Giangarra now performs this procedure. The late Dr. Kerlan was known for his work on knees and with professional football and basketball players. Dr. Giangarra's fellowship experience included working with a number of professional teams in California, including the Anaheim Angels, Los Angeles Dodgers and Los Angeles Rams.

- Practice in Palo Alto, California, and work as an orthopedic consultant to the San Francisco Giants
- Practice in a multi-specialty clinic in Wisconsin, including care for a number of university sports teams and orthopedic consulting to the New Orleans Saints summer camp.
- Service as an orthopedic consultant to the U.S. Olympics Team. This included a training program at an Olympic training center, which Dr. Giangarra completed in Colorado Springs, and evaluation for qualification in caring for Olympic-level athletes. He's served as an on-site orthopedic consultant for the Goodwill Games in 1997 and the Pan American Games in 1998.

### Free sports medicine screening clinic

The Marshall University Department of Sports Medicine will offer a free screening clinic on Saturday mornings, starting September 4.

**What:** Free screening and evaluation of sports injuries. Physicians will not provide treatment, but will evaluate injuries and advise patients what to expect, whether they need medical treatment, and where they can go for that treatment.

**Who:** The clinic is open to people of all ages with sports injury concerns, including runners, golfers, tennis players, and youth and school athletes.

**When:** 8:30 to 10:30 a.m., Saturdays. Patients will be seen on a first-come, first-served basis.

**Where:** Department of Surgery, 2nd Floor, Marshall University Medical Center (adjacent to Cabell Huntington Hospital on Hal Greer Boulevard in Huntington).

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