



688 Wildwood Road
Mahtomedi, MN 55115
(651) 429-9947

The Top 3 Reasons Why Strength and Power Training are Essential for ANY Athlete

By Dr. Matt Zellmer, PT, DPT, ATC/R, CSCS

Everyone can agree that sports-specific skills are crucial for success in athletics. There is nothing better than a high-arching jump shot splashing through the net or an upper-90 kick perfectly placed outside the reach of a diving soccer goalie. ***While these skills require hours of practice and continual development, so does an athlete's overall strength and power abilities.*** With athletes having limited time due to academic and athletic demands, it is important to note that [strength and power training programs](#) often only take a couple hours per week to make significant gains (but let us also keep in mind the average adolescent is on social media for over 2 hours a day).

Below are 3 benefits of strength and power training that will help enhance the athlete's sports-specific skills:

1. **Improvement in Running Speed:** The commonly used phrase "speed kills" refers to the advantage a team or athlete has over their opponents if they are superior in the realms of running acceleration and top-end sprint speed. While all athletes have a "genetic ceiling" when it comes sprinting, very few ever reach this due to either a lack of training or poor understanding of how to train for strength and power. ***Recent studies^{1,2} have found that this type of training can improve acceleration and speed up to an astounding 9%.*** By improving their strength and power, the athlete can generate force more quickly at each foot contact resulting in an increase in running velocity.
2. **Injury prevention:** Not only can strength and power training improve performance, but it has consistently been shown to decrease the risk of injury. ***A 2016 study³ analyzing elite youth soccer athletes found that injuries occurred over THREE TIMES MORE OFTEN in athletes that DIDN'T participate in strength training.*** Not only did athletes that performed strength training stay healthier and on the field, but these athletes performed significantly better during speed and agility testing throughout their season.

Interested in a Middle School or High School Strength and Athleticism Training Program?

Visit our [Fitness Focus Website](#) for upcoming opportunities. Also, make sure check out our [Fitness Focus Facebook Page](#) and [Instagram](#) for highlights of our current programs!

3. **Improved explosiveness:** Whether you are listening to a game on the radio or watching an athletic event from the bleachers, you will hear the phrase "it's a game of inches." The athlete that is more powerful and explosive often gets these extra inches that makes the difference in winning the "50/50" ball in soccer or blocking the game-point spike in volleyball. ***A study⁴ analyzing the effect of strength and plyometric training found that the greatest results occurred when these training programs were***



688 Wildwood Road
Mahtomedi, MN 55115
(651) 429-9947

performed simultaneously. In just a matter of 12 weeks of consistent training, the average vertical jump increased by an impressive 3.5 inches. For those of you not familiar with vertical jump testing, that is a HUGE gain!

Interested in our Strength and Athleticism Training Programs? Visit the [Fitness Focus Website](#) to view the upcoming programs, or check out the [Fitness Focus Facebook Page](#) or [Instagram](#) to view highlights of athletes training in our current programs. Also, feel free to contact Fitness Focus (located in Mahtomedi, MN) at (651) 429-9947 with any questions or to register today!

About the Author: Dr. Matt Zellmer is a physical therapist, athletic trainer and strength and conditioning specialist at Fitness Focus in Mahtomedi, MN. ***Along with treating physical therapy patients with a wide-variety of orthopedic and sports injuries, Matt is a member of the Sports Performance Training department at Fitness Focus.*** If you have any questions for Matt regarding physical therapy or strength and athleticism training, feel free to contact him directly at zellmer.matt.pt@gmail.com.

References:

1. Chelly, M. S., Ghenem, M. A., Abid, K., Hermassi, S., Tabka, Z., & Shephard, R. J. (2010). Effects of in-season short-term plyometric training program on leg power, jump- and sprint performance of soccer players. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, 24(10), 2670–2676.
2. Lockie, R. G., Murphy, A. J., Schultz, A. B., Knight, T. J., & Janse de Jonge, X. A. K. (2012). The effects of different speed training protocols on sprint acceleration kinematics and muscle strength and power in field sport athletes. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, 26(6), 1539–1550.
3. Zouita, S., Zouita, A. B. M., Keksi, W., Dupont, G., Ben Abderrahman, A., Ben Salah, F. Z., & Zouhal, H. (2016). Strength Training Reduces Injury Rate in Elite Young Soccer Players During One Season. *Journal of Strength and Conditioning Research*, 30(5), 1295–1307.
4. Fatouros, I. G., Jamurtas, A. Z., Leontsini, D., Taxildaris, K., Aggelousis, N., Kostopoulos, N., & Buckenmeyer, P. (2000). Evaluation of Plyometric Exercise Training, Weight Training, and Their Combination on Vertical Jumping Performance and Leg Strength. *ResearchGate*, 14(4).

The medical information on this email or article is provided as information resource only, and is not to be used or relied on for diagnostic or treatment purposes. This information should not be used as a substitute for professional diagnosis and treatment. Please consult your healthcare provider, or contact Fitness Focus for an appointment before making any healthcare decisions or for guidance about a specific medical condition. Fitness Focus shall have no liability, for any damages, loss, injury, or liability whatsoever suffered as a result of your reliance on the information contained in email or article.