

Acute Injury Management and Athletic Taping

By Randy Martin, M.D.

My approach to the evaluation of acute athletic injuries is the same as my approach to the stable office patient or to the dying intensive care unit patient. The first question to ask oneself is

"what is the current safety margin of the situation?" By safety margin, I mean how severe or mild is the injury. If the safety margin is large, meaning the injury is minor, a lot of things can be done, even the wrong things, and the athlete will not expe-

rience long lasting problems. When the safety margin is small, as when the athlete is critically injured, resources must be mobilized in a timely fashion. It should only take 15 seconds to make the first determination of "safety factor." This