

When looking at work-related injury risks have you ever considered the relationship between a professional athlete and the desk-bound office worker? Probably not, but you may be surprised at their close relationship so let me name a few:

First the SIMILARITIES...

Repetition: The professional athlete may be required to run/skate/swim continuously, likewise the office worker must have the stamina to endure sitting in one place for hours while holding the upper extremities in awkward positions (i.e.. the mouse).

Stress: Whether you are pushing your legs to finish the last mile of the boston marathon or working late into the night on tomorrow's report, the psychological stress can have negative effects on the body.

Working through pain: the NFL lineman with a back sprain feels pain the same way an administrative assistant feels a tension headache.

Now the obvious DIFFERENCES...

Physical Conditioning: there is no arguing that the professional athlete must be in top physical shape to perform their duties, whereas the computer programmer could land anywhere within a broad spectrum of physical abilities.

Work Environment : The professional athlete is blessed with the newest technology and equipment to allow them to excel in training and competition. All too frequently the office worker may have a desk that is too large, chair too short, and improper lighting.

Awareness: Most important the athlete is cognizant of their weaknesses and constantly strive for improvement. The office worker on the other hand will be more likely to neglect the importance of taking care of themselves.

The take home message. Do not underestimate the physical demands of your "daily grind". If you have a nagging pain or injury do not overlook the importance of overall physical fitness and proper workplace ergonomics. Examine the activities that you perform on a daily basis and the effects they may have on your health.

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