

ITF Tennis Science and Tennis Medicine – An Overview.
By Miguel Crespo, Ph.D, Development Research Officer
International Tennis Federation

**THIRD EUROPEAN CONGRESS OF SPORTS MEDICINE AND SCIENCE IN
TENNIS**
Barcelona, April 20 - 21, 2001

In the pursuit of more information to provide for optimal tennis performance, the game of tennis continues to be extensively studied and scrutinised by sports scientists and medical physicians throughout the world. Clearly, as related to this, sports medicine is one of the most important sports science disciplines. Whether it be through the development of new diagnostic, treatment, injury prevention and rehabilitation procedures or through the provision of specific training guidelines, sports medicine plays a vital role in the growth and development, and continued health of tennis players of all ages and levels of play.

The increasingly high financial stakes now involved in professional tennis has seen developments in tennis medicine grow exponentially in recent years. Today, tennis medicine is an established and evolving field with a vast sphere of activity that continues to expand. The application of science and medicine to the health, the training and the development of tennis players should be of interest for all persons involved in the game.

The International Tennis Federation (ITF), the governing body of tennis worldwide, has subsequently adopted a proactive role in pursuing this scientific information and governing certain medical issues related to the administration and regulation of the game. Initiatives such as The ITF Sports Medical Commission and The ITF Anti-Doping Programme provide just two examples of the attention the ITF pays to tennis medicine. Furthermore, it is the aim of the ITF to support research and the publication of resources in the Sport Sciences. In order to do so, the ITF is fostering tennis specific research in the areas of:

Sports Biomechanics, Exercise Physiology, Motor Learning, Sports Nutrition, Sports Psychology, and Sports Medicine.

The ITF Research Grants Programme supports research and the publication of resources specific to tennis, conducted by individuals who are independently, or in conjunction with academic institutions, exploring information, related to the teaching or playing of tennis. The results of this research are then distributed to coaches, parents and players around the world. The ITF expects that more substantive and well-supported research will lead to more effective approaches and programs for developing young talent, as well as for satisfying the concerns of recreational participants.