

Preface

Dear Reader:

We would like to introduce you to this book by way of a brief word to and about the authors represented here. These are all MDs or PTs who have taken time out from their extremely busy practices to compose the chapters you will be reading, and for that we are eternally grateful. You should also know that the majority of them are affiliated with the newly opened Micheli Center for the Prevention of Sports Injuries, in Waltham, MA. This highlights two important points: First, that dance is finally in the process of being recognized, from the standpoint of both medical and dance personnel, as a form of athletic activity. What this means to the dance community is that it is increasingly enjoying access to the extensive resources of sports medicine. Hence, if you are a dancer, or the parent of a dancer, and should make your way to the Micheli Center, you might well find yourself in the hands of one of our authors and can be confident that he or she will be fully conversant with your needs.

Second, it is a highly significant development that with the emergence of the Micheli Center the prevention of injuries has been institutionalized for the use of the general public. In essence, the mission of the Center mirrors the screening procedures that are now being implemented in many colleges, universities, conservatories, and some professional dance companies (as described in two chapters of this book), but the majority of dance students still do not have access to programs of that sort. To the best of our knowledge, the Center remains unique as of this date, but its early popularity provides reason to believe that it will soon be replicated elsewhere.

Finally, a cautionary note about the text you are about to encounter. A few of the chapters are laced with medical terminology that may be unfamiliar to you. This is the result of two factors: (1) the need to appeal to both dance and medical readers, who we have assumed would mutually comprise the book's readership, and (2) the fact that the way medical personnel conceive of prevention involves an understanding of the potential injuries that could result from a given activity (like dance), and that kind of understanding can only be communicated in the language of

medicine. Each chapter begins with definitions of its key terms, but if this remains an issue for you, our advice is to just stay with it, as brushing up against these terms here can come in handy when faced with an injury.

We salute your interest in keeping young dancers healthy so that they can realize their full potential. As we all know, “prevention is the better part of cure.”

Cordially,

Ruth Solomon
John Solomon
Santa Cruz, CA, USA

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Solomon, R.; Solomon, J.; Micheli, L.J. (Eds.)

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