

What's more Canadian than being a hockey player?

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Cite as: Millan B. What's more Canadian than being a hockey player? *Can Urol Assoc J* 2023;17(8Suppl3):S165. <http://dx.doi.org/10.5489/auaj.8498>

Playing competitive hockey is a life experience that has helped me develop several valuable qualities that I use daily to be the best doctor I can be. From developing strong teamwork and leadership skills to enhancing my ability to make quick and strategic decisions, the lessons I learned on the ice can be applied to the medical field in various meaningful ways.

One of the most obvious benefits of playing hockey was the development of teamwork skills. Hockey is a team sport that requires players to work together to achieve a common goal. The same is true of medicine, where doctors must collaborate with nurses, technicians, and other healthcare professionals to provide patients with the best possible care. In both arenas, effective communication and the ability to work collaboratively are essential. By playing hockey, I learned to rely on and trust my teammates, communicate effectively, and work together to overcome obstacles. These skills are directly transferable to residency and beyond, where the stakes are much higher and the consequences of poor teamwork can be life-threatening.

My experiences in hockey helped me develop strong leadership skills, which have been incredibly valuable. As a captain, and later a coach, it was imperative that I learned to motivate and inspire my teammates and players to perform at their best. By developing strong leadership skills through my involvement in hockey, I have become better equipped to handle the challenges of medicine. In urology, this applies directly to training the next generation of sur-

geons, particularly in the operating room, to be able to verbalize methods to perform safe and effective surgery.

In addition, hockey enhanced my ability to make quick and strategic decisions. Hockey is a fast-paced sport that requires players to think on their feet and make split-second decisions. Similarly, as doctors, we must be able to quickly assess a patient's condition and determine the best course of action. By honing my decision-making skills on the ice, I developed the ability to make confident and effective decisions in high-pressure situations.

Hockey also instilled in me a strong work ethic. Hockey requires a significant amount of physical and mental preparation, including regular training, conditioning, and practice. Similarly, surgery requires a commitment to ongoing learning and professional development, as well as long hours and intense focus. By developing a strong work ethic through hockey, I have been able to approach my medical career with the same dedication and commitment as I strive for success.

Finally, hockey helps develop resilience and the ability to persevere in the face of adversity. As a physically and mentally demanding sport, it poses many of the same challenges as residency, with long hours, high stress, and a need to stay focused and motivated even in difficult situations. By learning to push through obstacles and maintain a positive attitude in the face of adversity, I became better equipped to handle the challenges of medicine. As one of my mentor always says, "Surgery is a contact sport, people get hurt," and you need to be able to face these hardships, learn from them, and continue to work towards providing the best patient care possible.

The lessons I learned on the ice can be directly applied to being a doctor, and by honing these skills, I entered residency better equipped to handle the challenges we all face in medicine.