

New national study finds increase in football-related injuries among youth

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A new study conducted by researchers in the Center for Injury Research and Policy of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital found that an estimated 5.25 million football-related injuries among children and adolescents between 6 and 17 years of age were treated in U.S. emergency departments between 1990 and 2007. The annual number of football-related injuries increased 27 percent during the 18-year study period, jumping from 274,094 in 1990 to 346,772 in 2007.

"We found that nearly 2,000 pediatric and adolescent football-related injuries were treated every day in emergency departments during football season," said Lara McKenzie, PhD, study co-author and principal investigator in the Center for Injury Research and Policy at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "We need to do a better job of preventing football-related injuries among our [young athletes](#)."

According to the study, published in the journal *Clinical Pediatrics*, the most common injuries were sprains and strains (31 percent), [fractures](#) and dislocations (28 percent) and soft tissue injuries (24 percent). In addition, concussions accounted for 8,631 injuries each year. [Adolescents](#) aged 12 to 17 years old suffered a greater proportion of the injuries (78 percent), and were more likely to sustain a [concussion](#) or be injured at school when compared to younger players. Children aged 6 to 11 years old were more likely to sustain lacerations, and were often injured at home.

"Prevention and treatment of concussions are the focus of many discussions at every level of play - from the junior level all the way up to the National Football League. Our data shows that young athletes are at risk for concussions," said Dr. McKenzie, also a faculty member at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. "Every day during football season, an average of fifty-seven 6 to 17 year olds are treated in U.S. emergency

departments for football-related concussions. The potential long-term consequences of this type of injury make this an unacceptably high number."

Provided by Nationwide Children's Hospital

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