

Evidence for Preventing Sports-Related Concussions

Here Are Some Ways to Prevent Concussions

There is a lot of research happening in concussion prevention. Through this, we are finding promising ways to reduce concussions.

Reducing Player Contact



Limiting the number of contact and collision practices and holding shorter practices can help prevent concussions.¹

This has been shown to lower concussions not just in practices but also in the overall season of play.²

Concussion Education and Safety Training for Athletes, Coaches, and Athletic Staff



It is important to provide athletes and staff with educational materials on concussion prevention and awareness.

This also includes teaching proper form and positioning for contact plays such as tackling and blocking.³

Neuromuscular and Neck Strengthening Exercises



When someone plays sports, an impact can cause their head to accelerate. This acceleration can move brain tissue within the skull and result in a concussion. Research from the Michigan Concussion Center has shown that those with stronger necks have smaller head accelerations, thus a lower risk for concussions.⁴

Implementation and Enforcement of Proper Safety Rules and Policy During Play



Implementing and enforcing previously listed strategies through policy and rule changes can help reduce concussions.

Some examples include:

- Enforcing penalties for head-first contact and bodychecking plays
- Mandating concussion safety education and training



Key Facts



Here are some stats from IPC-affiliated studies on the effectiveness of these methods in preventing concussions.

Limiting the number and length of contact practices in American football resulted in fewer sports-related concussions during high school practices.¹ One study saw a 64% lower practice-related concussion rate.²

When policies that banned bodychecking in youth ice hockey were implemented, concussion rates lowered by 58% compared to leagues that did not.²

Hawaiian high school football players who completed the most helmetless tackling and blocking training during practices had a 34%-37% reduction in head impacts by the end of the season.³

Neuromuscular exercises led to 60% lower rates of SRCs in rugby players.²

Continued Research and Investment in Protective Technology and Strategies



There is still more research to be done to improve concussion prevention strategies and technologies. The Injury Prevention Center will continue to provide research that makes sports safer.

References

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