

High school football, wrestling athletes suffer highest rate of severe injuries

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High school football and wrestling athletes experienced the highest rate of severe injuries, according to the first study to examine severe injuries - injuries that caused high school athletes to miss more than 21 days of sport participation among a nationally representative sample of high school athletes. Severe injuries accounted for 15 percent of all high school sport-related injuries.

Overall, males experienced a higher rate of severe injuries, according to the study published in the September issue of the *American [Journal of Sports Medicine](#)* and conducted by researchers in the Center for Injury Research and Policy (CIRP) of The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital. However, this difference was driven by the large number of severe injuries that occurred in football and wrestling. In directly comparable sports, such as [soccer](#), [basketball](#) and baseball/softball, females sustained a higher severe injury rate. In all sports studied, severe injury rates were higher in competition than in practice.

"Twenty-nine percent of severe injuries occurred to the knee, making it the most commonly injured body site," explained the study's co-author Christy Collins, CIRP research associate at Nationwide Children's Hospital. "The ankle accounted for 12 percent followed by shoulder at 11 percent."

The most severe and common injury diagnoses were fractures (36 percent), complete ligament sprains (15 percent) and incomplete

ligament sprains (14 percent). Commonly fractured body sites included the hand and finger (18 percent), ankle (14 percent) and wrist (11 percent).

"[Severe injuries](#) negatively affect athletes' health and often place an increased burden on the health care system," said study co-author Dawn Comstock, PhD, CIRP principal investigator at Nationwide Children's and a faculty member of The Ohio State University College of Medicine. "Future research is needed to develop effective interventions to decrease the incidence and severity of high school [sports injuries](#)."

Source: Nationwide Children's Hospital ([news](#) : [web](#))

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