

Athletes face tough hits, players susceptible to concussions

September 22 2010

With the recent deaths of football players top of mind, parents and coaches should always be mindful of the risks of concussions. Kim Gorgens, assistant professor and neuropsychologist at the University of Denver (DU), says that the average football player receives 103 Gs when hit during a game. Most concussions deliver 95 Gs to the human body upon impact.

Gorgens, who is part the Colorado Youth Sports [Concussion](#) Special Interest Group, says the group is developing a protocol with the Colorado High School Activities Association to help protect youth athletes. In partnership with other stakeholders, including treating professionals, athletic trainers, and legislators, this new policy will reflect three principles of youth sports safety:

1. education for on-site personnel
2. removal from play for players with suspected concussions
3. medical clearance for return to participation (which includes a gradual return to activity)

Until these policies are in place, Gorgens says she would urge parents to be informed about the risks and the tools available to mitigate those risks.

"Ask about the training required of field personnel and the availability of protective equipment," Gorgens says. "Support fundraisers for new protective gear and make sure your kids WEAR it. Preventing the first injury is the only protection we have."

The exact number of youth sports concussion is unknown. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports an annual incidence of 134,959 youth sport-related concussions resulting in emergency department visits in the U.S. This number likely underestimates the total incidence of youth sports concussions because it does not include evaluations in non-emergency settings, or concussions that go unreported or undocumented.

Provided by University of Denver

Citation: Athletes face tough hits, players susceptible to concussions (2010, September 22) retrieved 26 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2010-09-athletes-tough-players-susceptible-concussions.html>

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