

Football could contribute to strokes in adolescents

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Young football players may be at higher risk for stroke, according to a new study released in *Journal of Child Neurology (JCN)*.

Researchers Dr. Jared R. Brosch and Dr. Meredith R. Golomb looked at various case studies of football players in their teens that suffered a stroke and found some potential causes for strokes in young football athletes. Some of those potential risks include:

- an increase of hyperventilation,
- repeated [neurological injury](#),
- use of [anabolic steroids](#),
- use of highly caffeinated energy drinks
- an increase in obesity of young players

The authors point out the increase in obesity presents a two-fold risk as it not only increases the force of impacts among the players, but also the likelihood for other [stroke risk factors](#) such as hypertension.

"Two of our subjects had mild hypertension, but were too young to have had the many years of exposure that would lead to chronic vascular injury," wrote the researchers.

Looking at the previous research, the authors did conclude that even more investigation was needed to better draw conclusions and best practices for dealing with [head trauma](#) and football in children.

"Organized childhood tackle football in the United States can begin at age 5 years, leading to potentially decades of repeated brain injuries. In addition, the [body mass index](#) of the United States pediatric football-playing population continues to increase, so the forces experienced by tackled pediatric players continues to increase," wrote Brosch and Golomb. "Further work is needed to understand how repeated high-impact large-force trauma from childhood football affects the immature central nervous system."

More information: "American Childhood Football as a Possible Risk Factor for Cerebral Infarction," in *Journal of Child Neurology* is available at jcn.sagepub.com/content/26/12/1493.full.pdf+html

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