

# Many high school football players not concerned about concussions

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Despite an increase in media attention, as well as national and local efforts to educate athletes on the potential dangers of traumatic brain injuries, a new study found that many high school football players are not concerned about the long-term effects of concussions and don't report their own concussion symptoms because they fear exclusion from play. The abstract, "Awareness and Attitudes of High School Athletes Towards Concussions," was presented on Oct. 22, at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in New Orleans.

Researchers provided high school varsity [football players](#) with an Internet link to a confidential survey. The survey asked players about their previous concussion history, level of comfort in recognizing concussion symptoms, awareness of potential long-term [health risks](#), and whether or not their attitudes on concussions had changed with the recent influx of information and warnings.

Of the 134 players who completed the survey, 10 percent reported that they had been diagnosed with a concussion by a physician or team trainer, while 32 percent reported they had concussion-like symptoms at some point over the past two years but did not seek [medical attention](#). More than half of the respondents said they did not seek attention due to concerns of being excluded from play. Seventy-one percent of the athletes noted that they were more aware of concussion symptoms than they were when entering high school; however, less than half reported they are more likely to report symptoms despite this increased

awareness.

"Interestingly, 85 percent of respondents noted that they received a majority of their concussion knowledge from their coach or trainer, while less than 10 percent obtained information from media outlets including TV, newspapers, magazines, and the Internet," said study author Michael Israel, MD, of the University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences.

Overall, the study showed that while the growing media attention has increased the awareness of high [school athletes](#), there has been only a marginal change in student athlete behaviors and concerns for possible health consequences, Israel said. "New evidence about sports-related concussions is constantly being produced, and we as a medical community need to do a better job of disseminating this information to coaches, trainers, and athletic associations to help ensure the safety of their athletes," he said.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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