

High Schools with athletic trainers have more diagnosed concussions, fewer overall injuries

October 22 2012

High schools with athletic trainers have lower overall injury rates, according to a new study, "A Comparative Analysis of Injury Rates and Patterns Among Girls' Soccer and Basketball Players," presented Oct. 22 at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in New Orleans. In addition, athletes at schools with athletic trainers are more likely to be diagnosed with a concussion.

Researchers reviewed national [sports injury](#) data on girls' high school soccer and basketball programs with [athletic trainers](#), between the fall of 2006 and the spring of 2009, from the Reporting Information Online (RIO™) and compared it to local Sports Injury Surveillance System (SISS) data on a sample of Chicago public high school programs without athletic trainers for the same sports and time period.

Overall injury rates were 1.73 times higher among [soccer players](#) and 1.22 times higher among [basketball players](#) in schools without athletic trainers. Recurrent injury rates were 5.7 times higher in soccer and 2.97 times higher in basketball in schools without athletic trainers. In contrast, [concussion](#) injury rates were 8.05 times higher in soccer and 4.5 times higher in basketball in schools with athletic trainers.

While less than 50 percent of U.S. high schools have athletic trainers, "this data shows the valuable role that they can play in preventing, diagnosing and managing concussions and other injuries," said Cynthia LaBella, MD, FAAP. "Athletic trainers have a skill set that is very valuable, especially now when there is such a focus on concussions and

related treatment and care. Concussed athletes are more likely to be identified in schools with athletic trainers and thus more likely to receive proper treatment.

"Athletic trainers facilitate treatment of injuries and monitor recovery so that athletes are not returned to play prematurely. This likely explains the lower rates of recurrent injuries in schools with athletic trainers," said Dr. LaBella.

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

Citation: High Schools with athletic trainers have more diagnosed concussions, fewer overall injuries (2012, October 22) retrieved 6 May 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2012-10-high-schools-athletic-trainers-concussions.html>

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