

# New study finds concussion-related health problems in retired football players

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Repeated concussions and mild brain trauma can result in reduced levels of growth hormone, gonadotropin, and thyroid hormones, causing disorders such as metabolic syndrome and erectile dysfunction and overall poor quality of life. The results of a new study of retired professional football players that compares number of concussions sustained during their careers and health problems associated with hormonal deficiency is published in *Journal of Neurotrauma*, a peer-reviewed journal from Mary Ann Liebert, Inc., publishers. The article is available free on the *Journal of Neurotrauma*.

In the article "Prevalence of pituitary hormone dysfunction, metabolic syndrome and impaired quality of life in retired [professional football players](#): a prospective study," the authors report that more than 50% of the retired players evaluated for growth hormone deficiency, hypogonadism, and quality of life had suffered at least three concussions during their careers in the National Football League. Repeat concussion is common in the NFL.

John T. Povlishock, PhD, Editor-in-Chief of *Journal of Neurotrauma* and Professor, Medical College of Virginia Campus of Virginia Commonwealth University, Richmond, notes that "although as emphasized by the authors, this study awaits further confirmation with expanded sample sizes and a more critical linkage to a history of concussion intensity and intervals between the concussive injuries, the findings are of considerable interest. Importantly, this study moves us away from the singular focus that repetitive concussive brain injuries

ultimately lead to chronic traumatic encephalopathy to the premise that such injuries can elicit pituitary dysfunction and [metabolic syndrome](#) that may be significant contributors to a poor quality of life in a subset of professional athletes."

**More information:** *Journal of Neurotrauma* [DOI: 10.1089/neu.2013.321](#)

Provided by Mary Ann Liebert, Inc

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