

Prevention programs significantly reduce ankle injuries in soccer athletes

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Prevention programs are effective at reducing the risk of ankle injuries by 40 percent in soccer players, according to a new study appearing in today's issue of the *Journal of Bone and Joint Surgery (JBJS)*.

Injuries to the lower extremities are the most common in soccer. According to the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC), more than 227,700 people were treated for soccer-related injuries in 2015, including more than 36,300 with ankle injuries. These injuries can be traumatic, often sidelining players from the game for weeks or months.

Several [prevention programs](#) have been developed to address this concern. In a new analysis, researchers reviewed the data from 10 randomized controlled studies on ankle [injury prevention](#) programs, involving 4,121 female and male [soccer players](#).

"This is the first study of its kind on ankle injuries in [soccer](#) athletes to strongly support injury prevention programs to reduce ankle injuries," said lead study author and orthopaedic surgeon Nathan Grimm, MD. "In our analysis, we were able to review the results from multiple studies, and make conclusions we could not make from any one study by itself."

The studies included neuromuscular, proprioceptive (balance), strengthening, and stretching exercises to prevent ankle injuries. They did not include bracing, taping or other external supports.

"This new data can be used by clinicians to provide evidence-based

recommendations to their patients," explained Dr. Grimm. "It can also be used by coaches who wish to implement programs that will decrease the risk of injuries in athletes, and by the athletes who are trying to make the decision about participating in an injury prevention program."

More information: N. L. Grimm et al. Ankle Injury Prevention Programs for Soccer Athletes Are Protective: A Level-I Meta-Analysis, *The Journal of Bone & Joint Surgery* (2016). [DOI: 10.2106/JBJS.15.00933](https://doi.org/10.2106/JBJS.15.00933)

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