

# AAOS: sports-related orthopedic injuries in seniors projected to grow 123 percent by 2040

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Sports-related injuries among older adults are expected to increase 123 percent between 2021 and 2040, according to a study presented at the 2024 Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, held from Feb. 12 to 16 in San Francisco.

Nareena Imam, from UConn Health in Farmington, and colleagues estimated the national incidence and etiologies of sports-related orthopedic injuries in U.S. adults aged 65 years and older, as well as trends in sports-related injuries in [older adults](#). The analysis included [patients](#) aged 65 years and older with sports-related orthopedic injuries in U.S. emergency departments (2012 to 2021) identified from the National Electronic Injury Surveillance System database.

The researchers found there were an estimated 772,973 sports-related orthopedic injuries in older adults (mean age, 73.0 years) during the study period. Just under half of injuries occurred in women (45.0 percent). Over time, there was a significant increase in injuries (55,684 in 2012 to 93,221 in 2021). A similar increase in the national incidence of sports-related musculoskeletal injuries was simultaneously seen (134 per 100,000 in 2012 to 167 per 100,000 in 2021). By 2040, there will be an estimated 207,570 sports-related orthopedic injuries in older adults, an increase of 123 percent from 2021, while the number of orthopedic surgeons is only projected to increase by 7.9 percent during the same time period.

"There are traditionally different protocols and treatments for this age group," coauthor Jay Zaifman, M.D., from the NYU Grossman School of Medicine in New York City, said in a statement. "We now need to consider the new higher demands of many of these patients. Taking a patient-centered approach and rethinking our standard of care for more active older adults is crucial."

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