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Brain Injury Study Shows Increased Death Rate (/highschool/brain-injury-study-shows-increased-deathrate.html)

by Courtney Cameron (/featured-writer-blogs/courtney-cameron.html) I January 2017

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Last Thursday, a study was released by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention showing a small increase in recent years in high school football player deaths attributed to brain and spinal injuries.

The study, led by University of North Carolina researcher Kristen Kucera, shows that most traumatic head and spinal injury deaths from the years 2005-2014 occurred during games and were the result of tackling or being tackled.

The study, which has been gathering data about college and high school football-related injuries since 1965, found that roughly 20 percent of brain injury-related fatalities occurred in players who had suffered a previous concussion within a month of the fatal injury.

UNC's Kucera told CBS News (http://www.cbsnews.com/news/brain-injury-deaths-high-schoolfootball-players-rising/) that the fatality rate due to brain and spinal injuries in young football players is still lower than in past decades. In the years 1965-1974, approximately 4 times the number of fatal injuries occurred as in the years 2005-2014.

Kucera attributes the lower death rates, which fell dramatically in the 1990s then plateaued, to better helmet safety standards, improvements in medical care and league regulations against head-first tackling.

According to Kucera, it is possible that the recent increase in head and spinal injury-related deaths shown by the study is merely caused by an increase of media attention and greater accuracy in injury reporting.



(/featured-writer-blogs/courtney-cameron.html) Courtney Cameron (/featured-writer-blogs/courtney-cameron.html) is Editorial Assistant of Athletic Business.

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