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Is old really gold? Examining the effect of playing experience in preventing professional athletes' injuries

Gautham Pavar

Wayne State University, he2765@wayne.edu

Abdullah Sahyouni

Wayne State University, sahyouni@wayne.edu

Robert De la Torre

Wayne State University, delatorre@wayne.edu

Kinan Sawar

Wayne State University, Kinan.sawar@med.wayne.edu

Yasmeen Alcodray

Wayne State University, yasmeen.alcodray@med.wayne.edu

See next page for additional authors

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Authors

Gautham Pavar, Abdullah Sahyouni, Robert De la Torre, Kinan Sawar, Yasmeeen Alcodray, Justin Bennie, Nicole Xu, Harika Bollineni, and Bohdan Matsko

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Introduction: The literature contains research showing that age increases the risk of injury in individuals who live sedentary lives. Looking at injury rates in individuals who are active for a living can better inform the importance of exercise training regimens in an aging population

Methods: Combing player injury data from the NFL and player statistics from pro-football-reference.com, we will create a dataset containing variables like seasons played in the NFL and age of player at time of injury. We will include all uninjured players in our dataset for comparison. We will use ANOVA to figure out how much these variables accounted for the incidence of injury in athletes.

Results: Data is in the process of being collected. We expect that data analysis will likely indicate that player position (Quarter back, Linebacker, etc.) was the variable recorded that explained the most variance in injury. Age of player might be weakly positively correlated and seasons played in the NFL will probably have no correlation.

Discussion: Seasons played probably does not correlate to injury risk since many NFL players have played football for multiple years prior to the NFL: future NFL players may start their football careers in middle school or highschool and spend differing amounts of time in college football, it is unfeasible to use this variable to extrapolate the actual amount of football experience players have. While older players are likely more injury prone than younger players, this factor is minimal compared to the likely effect of player position. Probably, active older adults should be encouraged to pursue physical activity that has been shown to have less risk of injury.