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Do Lower Extremity Injuries of NFL Players Affect their Yearly Income?

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Introduction: Injuries are arguably the most daunting career setbacks professional sports players have to face. To better understand the drawbacks of sports injuries, we decided to examine players' annual income before and after sports injuries. Income is arguably the most important metric of success for professional athletes. To make the study more relevant for the US, we collected data on one of the most viewed professional sports leagues in the country: the National Football League (NFL).

Methods: We examined the NFL's weekly injury reports for seasons from 2016 to 2020, and recorded players with lower extremity injuries (LEI) (Hamstring, Calves, Groin, or Quadricep). We accessed pro-football-reference.com and spotrac.com to record player identifiers and individual annual salaries 3 years prior to the index injury and up to 7 years after if data was available respectively. A google spreadsheet was used to record all information noted above.

Results: Data is available, pending analysis.

Discussion: This project will allow us to better understand the impact injuries have on the lives of hundreds of professional sports players and how it can alter the course of their careers. This project sheds light on the importance of this topic. We plan to build off of this in future research by examining variables that affect recovery time and the recurrence of injury throughout athletes' careers.