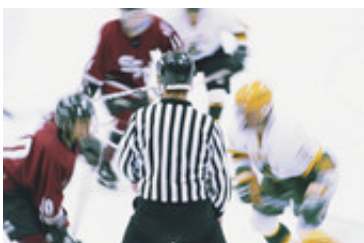


Fractures take high toll on high school athletes

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Study found most of these injuries from boys' contact sports, girls' lacrosse.

(HealthDay)—Fractures account for about 10 percent of all injuries suffered by U.S. high school athletes, and can have a major physical, emotional and financial impact on the young competitors, according to a new study.

The findings highlight the need for fracture [prevention programs](#) in high school sports, the Ohio State University researchers said.

Researchers analyzed 2008-2009 and 2010-2011 data from the National High School Sports-Related Injury Surveillance System. Fracture rates were highest in boys' sports—including football, ice hockey and lacrosse—and boys suffered 79 percent of all fractures reported.

The most frequent fracture sites were the hand/finger, lower leg and wrist. About 17 percent of fractures led to surgery, a rate higher than all

other injuries combined. Older athletes had lower fracture rates than younger athletes.

The researchers were surprised to find that a high proportion of fractures suffered by female lacrosse players were caused by player-to-player contact.

"Because girls' lacrosse is a noncontact sport we didn't expect to identify contact as the number-one cause of fractures in the sport," lead researcher David Swenson, an M.D./M.P.H. candidate at the Ohio State Colleges of Medicine and Public Health, said in an Ohio State University Center for Clinical and Translational Science news release.

"What we found was eye opening and highlighted the need for closer adherence to the rules of the game, as well as the potential for new rules like requiring protective equipment to keep these athletes safe on the field," he said.

The study was published in a recent issue of *The [American Journal of Sports Medicine](#)*.

"As we continue to see a rise in U.S. [high school students](#) playing sports, it's likely we will see a continued trend of increased injuries among these same athletes, including fractures," Swenson said.

"Unless we change our approach to the way these athletes are trained, players and their families will continue to be faced with the unpleasant reality of fractures, which include expensive surgeries, diagnostic testing and restricted sports participation," he added.

Nearly 8 million U.S. high school students participate in sports every year.

More information: The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons has more about [high school sports injuries](#).

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