

## Study: Rates of football-related concussions in children drop 39% from 2013-'18

July 10, 2020

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Article type: [News](#)

Topics: [Concussion](#), [Sports Medicine/Physical Fitness](#)

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Children are being treated for sports and recreation-related traumatic brain injuries (SRR-TBIs) in emergency departments (EDs) at declining rates, according to a new study.

Rates dropped about 27% from 2012-'18, from about 411 per 100,000 children and teens to 299 per 100,000, researchers from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) said in a new *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

About 41% of the TBIs from 2001-'18 were attributed to contact sports, and these rates were on the rise for the first decade of the study. This may have been due in part to increased awareness. The rates then dropped 32% from 2012-'18, which researchers attributed in large part to a 39% decrease in football-related TBIs that began in 2013.

Decreasing participation in youth football and new limits some leagues are placing on tackling during practices may have contributed to the declining football-related TBIs, according to the study. Still, the sport had the highest TBI rates among any contact sport at 72 per 100,000 children, followed by 47 for basketball and 39 for soccer.

Authors noted their figures don't count the many TBI cases not treated in an ED. They also called for more research on preventing TBIs in a variety of sports.

"Expanding efforts to address SRR-TBIs in football, the sport with the highest incidence of TBI, and identifying prevention strategies for other sports with high rates of SRR-TBI could reduce the prevalence of these injuries among children," they wrote.

### Resources

- [AAP clinical report "Sports-Related Concussion in Children and Adolescents"](#)
- [AAP policy statement "Tackling in Youth Football"](#)
- [CDC HEADS UP materials aimed at parents, providers, coaches and schools](#)
- [CDC recommendations and resources for mild TBI](#)
- [Information for parents from HealthyChildren.org on sports-related concussions](#)

