

NEWS RELEASE

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**NATIONAL STUDY FIRST TO DESCRIBE SPORT-RELATED CONCUSSION  
AMONG HIGH SCHOOL, COLLEGIATE ATHLETES**

*Study published in the Journal of Athletic Training shows girls at higher risk for concussions*

(COLUMBUS, Ohio) – An estimated 300,000 sport-related traumatic brain injuries, predominately concussions, occur annually in the United States. In fact, for young people 15- to 24-years-old, sports are second only to motor vehicle crashes as the leading cause of traumatic brain injury.

A study conducted by researchers in the Center for Injury Research and Policy (CIRP) at The Research Institute at Nationwide Children's Hospital, is the first to describe rates, patterns and potential risk factors for sport-related concussion using nationally representative samples of high school and collegiate athletes.

According to the study, published in the *Journal of Athletic Training*, in sports played by both sexes, girls sustained more concussions than boys in both high school and college. College athletes had higher rates of concussion than high school athletes, but concussions represented a greater proportion of all injuries among high school athletes.

“By identifying patterns that can predict concussions, we may be able to reduce concussion rates through targeted, evidence-based interventions,” said Dawn Comstock, PhD, the study's author and principal investigator in CIRP at Nationwide Children's Hospital. “Developing effective sport-related concussion preventive measures depend upon increasing our knowledge of concussion rates, patterns and risk factors.”

Concussions represented nearly 10 percent of all high school athletic injuries and over five percent of all collegiate athletic injuries. Among both groups, rates of concussions were highest in the sports of football and soccer.

“It is important to note we are not suggesting parents pull their child from organized sports because of fear of injury,” said Comstock, also a faculty member at The Ohio State University College of Medicine. “We have a childhood obesity epidemic on hand and physical activity is key to combat against that. Our goal is to make sports as safe as possible for kids to play.”

Data for the study were collected from two injury surveillance systems, the 2005-06 National High School Sports Injury Surveillance System (High School RIO™) and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) Injury Surveillance System. This included 100 high schools and 180 colleges in the U.S.