



The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine

News Release

Contact: AOSSM Director of Communications, Lisa Weisenberger, at 847/655-8647 or e-mail lisa@aossm.org

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Vitamin D Lower In NFL Football Players Who Suffered Muscled Injuries, Study Reports

SAN DIEGO, CA – Vitamin D deficiency has been known to cause an assortment of health problems, a recent study being presented at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Annual Meeting in San Diego today, suggests that lack of the vitamin might also increase the chance of muscle injuries in athletes, specifically NFL football players.

"Eighty percent of the football team we studied had vitamin D insufficiency. African American players and players who suffered muscle injuries had significantly lower levels," said Michael Shindle, MD, lead researcher and member of Summit Medical Group.

Researchers identified 89 football players from a single NFL team and provided laboratory testing of vitamin D levels in the spring 2010 as part of routine pre-season evaluations. The mean age of the players was 25. The team provided data to determine the number of players who had lost time due to muscle injuries. Vitamin D levels were then classified based on player race and time lost due to muscle injury.

Twenty-seven players had deficient levels (<20 ng/mL) and an additional 45 had levels consistent with insufficiency (20-31.9 ng/mL). Seventeen players had values within normal limits (>32 ng/mL). The mean vitamin D level in white players was 30.3 ng/mL while the mean level for black players was 20.4 ng/mL. Sixteen players suffered a muscle injury with a mean vitamin D level of 19.9.

"Screening and treatment of vitamin D insufficiency in professional athletes may be a simple way to help prevent injuries," said Dr. Scott Rodeo, MD, Co-Chief of the Sports Medicine and Shoulder Service at the Hospital for Special Surgery. "Further research also needs to be conducted in order to determine if increasing vitamin D leads to improved maximum muscle function," said Dr. Joseph Lane, MD, Director of the Metabolic Bone Disease Service at the Hospital for Special Surgery."

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The American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) is a world leader in sports medicine education, research, communication and fellowship, and includes national and international orthopaedic sports medicine leaders. The Society works closely with many other sports medicine specialists, including athletic trainers, physical therapists, family physicians, and others to improve the identification, prevention, treatment, and rehabilitation of sports injuries. AOSSM is also a founding partner of the [STOP Sports Injuries](#) campaign to prevent overuse and traumatic injuries in kids. For more information on AOSSM or the STOP Sports Injuries campaign, visit www.sportsmed.org or www.stopsportsinjuries.org