



**Contact:** AOSSM Director of Communications, Lisa Weisenberger, at 847/655-8647 or e-mail [lisa@aossm.org](mailto:lisa@aossm.org)

**EMBARGOED FOR RELEASE UNTIL SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2012**

## **Amateur Football Players Not Always Keen on Returning to Play After ACL Injuries**

**SAN FRANCISCO, CA** – Despite the known success rates of reconstructive Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) surgery, the number of high school and collegiate football players returning to play may not be as high as anticipated, say researchers presenting at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine’s Specialty Day in San Francisco, CA.

“Previous research shows that reconstructive surgeries are a generally effective treatment for ACL injured knees. While athletes may be physically capable of playing, we sometimes ignore other factors that may prevent them from getting back out there,” said senior author Kurt P. Spindler, MD, of Vanderbilt Sports Medicine.

The study examined data from patients enrolled in the Multicenter Orthopaedic Outcomes Network (MOON) cohort who underwent ACL reconstruction in 2002 and 2003. Of 149 high school and collegiate players, 62 and 70 percent returned to play, respectively. Among this group, 28% felt they did not perform at their previous level. Of those who did not return, 53% of the high school and 44% of collegiate players said fear of re-injury played a major role in their decision not to return.

“While return to play may be perceived as the central concern for a competitive athlete recovering from an injury, it is easy to ignore psychological factors keeping a player off the field,” noted Spindler. “Fear of re-injury and concern over decreased performance may hinder even the most physically capable athlete.”

Authors suggest additional research needs to be performed to examine more recent years of data, as well as to analyze specific positions played as they relate to rate of return.

###

The [American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine](http://www.aossm.org) (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](http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org) campaign to prevent overuse and traumatic injuries in kids. For more information on AOSSM or the STOP Sports Injuries campaign, visit [www.sportsmed.org](http://www.sportsmed.org) or [www.stopsportsinjuries.org](http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org)