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Corticosteroid Injections May Help Injured NFL Players Return to Play Sooner

CHICAGO, IL – Corticosteroid injections may speed-up the return time for National Football League (NFL) players suffering high ankle sprains, according to research presented today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine’s Annual Meeting in Chicago, IL. Players treated with these injections typically returned 40% faster or approximately 10 days earlier than those not receiving the same treatment.

“After examining players with stable high ankle sprains over an eight-year period, we discovered those treated with corticosteroid injections returned to play within an average 15 days, as compared to 25 days for those not treated similarly,” noted Alfred A. Mansour, MD, from UT-Houston Orthopaedics in Houston, Texas. “For high-level athletes such as NFL players, returning to play 10 days sooner can have a significant impact personally and for the team.”

The study examined 31 players from two NFL teams, with 13 players receiving a corticosteroid injection within 72 hours of an ankle injury. All players involved in the study went through a standard non-operative rehabilitation program, including crutches, weight-bearing activity as tolerated, NSAIDs treatment, and a progressive return to play training.

“While previous research explores the extended recovery involved with these injuries, our data offers a new treatment option that may be more effective for NFL players,” noted Mansour. “Further research can help confirm this, though we are excited to discover ways to help athletes at the professional level.”

The authors reported no complications in players treated with the corticosteroid injections.

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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 or www.stopsportsinjuries.org