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Ankle sprain injury prevalence, risk factors and current prevention interventions among amateur male soccer players in Umkhanyakude district, Kwa-Zulu Natal.

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Abstract

Background: Soccer is one of the most played sports globally, with different levels of participation including amateur and professional levels. Participation in sports has health benefits such as prevention of cardiovascular and chronic diseases and general body health and fitness. The soccer players encounter different injuries including the ankle sprains, which burden the health sector and cut players' career trajectory short. This study aims to determine ankle sprain injury prevalence, risk factors and current prevention interventions in Kwa-Zulu Natal male soccer players.

Methods: A cross-sectional design was used to conduct this study from eighty four soccer players that were playing in six different teams. All teams were registered in Umkhanyakude South African Breweries (SAB) league under Jozini municipality. Data was saved in Excel and exported to statistical package for social science (SPSS) tool version 27 for analysis. Fisher's test was used to test the associations between risk factors and prevalence of ankle sprain.

Results: Eighty four players were included in this study. Fifty percent of the players had ankle sprain injuries. Direct contact and previous ankle sprain were associated with prevalence of ankle ($p<0.001$), while body mass index (BMI), playing position, limb dominance and cleat type were not found associated with ankle sprain prevalence ($p>0.05$). There was no injury prevention intervention program that soccer teams were practicing to reduce injury occurrence.

Conclusion: Ankle sprain injuries are prevalent in amateur soccer players. Direct contact and previous ankle sprain are significantly associated with ankle sprain injuries. Proper injury prevention intervention is not practiced in amateur soccer players. Therefore, prevention intervention is needed in amateur soccer players to reduce the prevalence of injuries.

Keywords: Ankle injury, sprain, prevalence, risk factors and prevention.