

TACKLE FOOTBALL

By Aaron Lindenstraus

Oh, what a hit! And he is down. Stays down. He can't get up from the ground. The doctors are coming on the field. They are bringing a stretcher. The ambulance will take him to the hospital. He will not be back for months. Wow, with a hit like that to the head, I hope he's okay. I don't think he will ever come back to high school football. Playing football was a big mistake. The other players are scared to play. The referees call off the game. This happens way too often.

Kids love to play tackle football. It is one of the most popular sports in America. In the National Football League (NFL) players get paid a lot of money. This makes kids even more tempted to play football other than the fact that it is a fun sport.

The problem with tackle football is that it is too dangerous. You can get head and neck injuries. Some of these injuries are life lasting or worse! But you can also get broken arms and legs, hamstring injuries, sprained ankles and a lot more!

TACKLE FOOTBALL AND DIFFERENT TYPES

Football is one of America's top sports. Here is why: people enjoy watching the action and want to play it themselves. They play flag, touch and tackle and have a lot of fun. Football is usually played on a 100 yard field where the players try to score a touchdown by getting the ball in their end zone. The end zone is at both ends of the field.

In flag football, the other team tries to stop the player running with the ball from getting in the end zone by pulling one of the two flags worn on the side of that player. In touch football, the player is touched with 2 hands by the other team's player to stop him. But in tackle football, the other team tries to stop the player from getting in the end zone by TACKLING him.

Unlike other sports, people make hard hits to tackle. Some high school and college kids don't know how to tackle the proper way so the kids often use their head. That's how kids get brain injuries. If you have a head injury, you are more likely to get another head injury.



WHY TACKLE FOOTBALL IS DANGEROUS FOR KIDS TO PLAY

Tackle football is really dangerous. Kids (mostly high school and college) don't know how to tackle properly and tackle the person with their head. That's how you can get a concussion or another neck or head injury. Beyond that, you can get all different kinds of injuries crashing into someone or getting tackled. There are even more ways. The game might be fun but you are risking big lifetime injuries. Here are some facts about tackle football and how it is dangerous

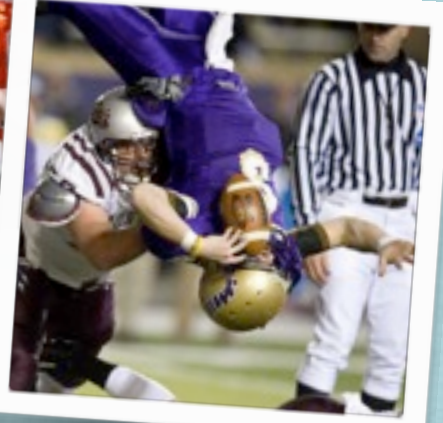
In the 2007 high school football season, researchers from the University of Illinois collected data on hits to the body. The researchers collected that data from 68 sessions including 55 practices and 13 games. The researchers analyzed a total of 19, 224 inputs. They found that people received bigger hits during games than practice. And when compared to college research, people got more hits to the head in high school than in college by 10%.

In one year in the U.S. A., according to the article, "The Risk of High School Football Tackles" by Tara Parker-Pope, the average amount of brain injuries sustained by high school tackle football players is over 250,000! Ten percent of college players and 20 percent of high school football players sustain brain injuries. Five to 6 percent of football players suffer concussions or other forms of brain injury. Of 1.2 million teenagers who play high school football, between 4 and 6 percent sustain concussions and another 43,200 to 67,200 injuries are sustained each year. Football players with brain injuries also are 6 times as likely to get another brain injury. I haven't heard of other sports that are so popular and dangerous.

ON THE FIELD



* A hard-hit tackle to a ten-year-old



A college football star is sacked by a defensive linebacker.

Yes or No?

So what do you think, should kids play tackle football? Do you think it is worth the risk of getting injured? After doing all the research, I am now sure that it is not worth the risk for me to play. Before I wrote this, I read an article in The Weekly Reader News about tackle football and in the article it said how dangerous tackle football is for kids up to college age. That got me inspired to write about this and to get more research on that same topic.

