



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

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Surgeries Before College Athletics May Result In More Injuries During College Play

ORLANDO, FL – Athletes who've had lower extremity surgeries before going on to play in college, might be at a higher risk for another surgery independent of gender and sport, say researchers presenting their work today at the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine's (AOSSM) Annual Meeting in Orlando, FL.

“This is the first study to look at the relationship between precollegiate surgery and future injury requiring surgery in collegiate athletes. Our results suggest that athletes injured before college might be left with a functional deficit that puts them at risk for future injury,” said lead author, Dean Wang, MD from the University of California at Los Angeles.

Wang and his colleagues identified 1,142 athletes who began their sports participation from 2003-2009 at a single institution. Twenty different sports were included in the study with all athletes having received a pre-participation physical. Of these individuals 186 (16.3%) had a prior surgery. There were 262 documented intracollegiate surgeries in 182 athletes (15.9%). The most common surgeries were knee arthroscopies with meniscus repair/debridement and/or chondroplasty/microfracture. Most of the injuries involved the lower extremity (59%) rather than the upper extremity (31%).

“Young athletes feel pressure to excel and frequently participate in multiple leagues and specialize in a single sport, resulting in overuse injuries and surgeries at an early age. As a result, sports-related injury requiring surgery has increased significantly in recent years. Our study, along with other information in the scientific literature, may also indicate that athletes may not go through enough rehabilitation before returning to play and warrants further analysis,” said Wang.

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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