

Prevalence of weekly self-reported health problems in Young Elite Female Football Player over an entire season

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In young elite female football player, health problems are highly prevalent and exhibit a seasonal pattern, with a significant impact on training participation.

Background

Young female football players are more susceptible to injuries (than young male), potentially impacting their progression and careers (Kolstrup et al., 2016).

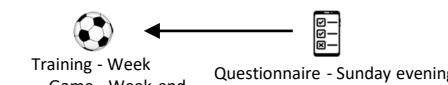
Overuse injuries are prevalent in young football players, especially as they undergo rapid changes in training loads at different maturity stages (DiFiori et al., 2014).

The OSTRC-O2 questionnaire (Clarsen et al., 2020) is used to monitor overuse injuries, and there is a need for more precise results on the follow-up of overuse injuries over the course of a season.

Design Method

19 elite female football players (age: 14.5 \pm 0.7 y; training volume: 9h/week) at the Swiss Football Association's training center.

Overuse injuries were monitored using the OSTRC-O2 questionnaire sent electronically to each player every Sunday evening during the 2022-2023 season.



The Swiss elite youth Football Team during the season 2022/23

Results

The severity score (divided into the 4 categories) fluctuates throughout the season, peaking at the beginning of the season, in February, and at the end of the season (Figure 1). The mean Severity Score per player over the season was 20.4 /100.

During the 38-week season, there were 37 weeks in which at least one athlete reported a moderate or strong injury, and no week in which all players reported no problem/pain (Figure 2).



Figure 1 – OSTRC-O2 Severity Score during the season 2022/23

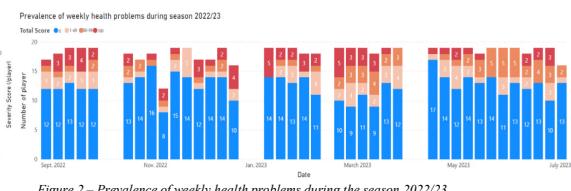


Figure 2 – Prevalence of weekly health problems during the season 2022/23

Conclusion

In **very young female football player**, the problem of **injuries and complaints** is **very present**, it has a **seasonal component** and it is necessary to **take actions** (load adaptation, prevention) to try to **reduce the consequences**.