

The Groin Pain with a Focus on the Prevalence of Different Pathological Pain Sources in Football Players: A Systematic Review

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Groin injury accounts for 5% to 18% of all sports injuries, frequently affecting athletes in sports like soccer and Australian football, which involve repetitive kicking, side-to-side movement, and twisting. In professional football, the impact is particularly pronounced, with players averaging two time-loss injuries per season.

Aim: To determine the prevalence of groin pain suggestive of various defined pathology terminology used in Doha agreement.

Materials and Methods: A systematic literature search was undertaken across several major online databases, including PubMed, BJSM, SAGE Journals, Research Gate, and Google Scholar. The search strategy encompassed cohort studies, systematic reviews, and randomised clinical trials published from database inception through December 2024. Studies reporting data on the prevalence of groin injury pathology, using terminologies defined in the Doha agreement, were included in this review.

Results: A search using the keywords “groin injury in football player,” “groin pain in football player,” and “occurrence of groin harm in football player” yielded eleven studies for analysis of groin pain prevalence. While all studies compared the prevalence of adductor-related and iliopsoas-related groin pain, the infrequent use of other Doha agreement terminology limited this analysis to these two specific pathologies.

Conclusion: The review findings indicate that groin pain in football players stems primarily from hip adductor injuries, with iliopsoas injuries as a secondary cause. Clinically, this suggests a need for further investigation into other potential sources of groin pain, as current understanding is limited regarding pathologies outside of these two muscle groups. Since adductor and iliopsoas injuries are known risk factors, preventive strategies targeting these muscle groups are essential.

Keywords: Groin pain, Pain in football players, Repetitive kicking