

# Foot Deformities in Football Players: A Narrative Review

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## ABSTRACT

Football being a globally celebrated sport, poses tremendous physical demands on footballers leading to multiple stress injuries. Profound stress due to repetitive impacts, rapid manoeuvring on field and long hours of game time leads to a wide range of foot deformities like hallux valgus, pes planus, plantar fasciitis and claw toes. These deformities not only affect the game play and athletic performance but also expose the athlete to chronic challenges related to health. This review was taken up to examine the prevalence, aetiology, causative factors and strategies to manage the foot deformities in football players. Review used assorted studies focussing on primary/intrinsic (foot anatomy) and secondary/extrinsic (field type, footwear, training, playing conditions) factors in consideration, owing to foot deformities. An exhausting data search was carried out on various

databases like Ovid, Scopus, Pubmed, Cochrane etc. to filter out the studies done on footballers suffering from foot deformities as an occupational hazard. Football as a sport uses repetitive patterns like kicking, jumping, sprinting which may be a contributing factor to these deformities. Modifiable factors including footwear, arch support, ill fitted cleat, dehydration, inadequate training are also found to be adding to foot deformities development. This review also highlights the role of strength and flexibility training along with customised shoe wear and orthotics to maximise the athletic performance. Use of specialised cutting edge diagnostic tools like 3D gait analysis, pressure mapping is showing good potential in prognosticating these injuries and should be studied more in this aspect in future researches.

**Keywords:** Athletic performance, Hallux valgus, Multiple stress injuries