

## Frequency of Foot and Ankle Injuries in Professional Soccer Players Following the Introduction of Prehab that Incorporates Elements of the FIFA 11+

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### **Summary:**

The use of Prehab that incorporates elements of the FIFA 11+ will result in a decrease in the frequency of foot and ankle injuries in a professional soccer team environment.

### **Abstract:**

#### **Introduction:**

Foot and ankle injuries are common amongst footballers. The FIFA 11+ is one form of Prehab that is designed to decrease their incidence. Our aim was to determine the frequency of foot and ankle injuries following the introduction of Prehab.

#### **Methods:**

Data was collected prospectively regarding every injury suffered by a player at an English Professional Football Club. This included diagnosis, time to return to play, mechanism of injury, activity during injury, treatment received, side of injury and ground conditions. This data was recorded prior to and following the introduction of a Prehab exercise regime that includes the ankle proprioception exercises from the FIFA 11+.

#### **Results:**

Overall 421 injuries were recorded, 301 of which were involving First Team Squad players. Of the 301, 63 (20.9%) were Foot and Ankle injuries. 35 of these were prior to the introduction of the Prehab and 28 after. Ankle sprains (ATFL injury) were the most common injury but their frequency decreased from 37.1% to 10.7% following the introduction of Prehab ( $p < 0.05$ ). The mean number of days absent from training after an ATFL injury also decreased following the introduction of Prehab from 16 days to 3 days. The frequency of injuries suffered in training also decreased from 53.1% to 36% after the introduction of Prehab.

#### **Conclusion:**

The introduction of a Prehab protocol including the ankle exercise components of the FIFA 11+ results in a statistically significant decrease in the frequency and severity of ankle sprains within the setting of a professional football club.