Football Players Are Deciding Concussions Are Not Worth The Risk

We often hear that professional football players are in the best shape of their lives. Their level of fitness cannot be denied, but what about their overall health, specifically their brain health? There has been increasing concern over the long-term effects of the concussions football players routinely suffer from collisions on the field. A professional football player will receive 900-1500 blows to the head during a single season and will have a 75% chance of suffering a concussion.

Previously, players sacrificed their brain health for the love of the game, for money and opportunities, or because they felt they had no choice. Now a 24-year-old professional football player named Chris Borland has decided the risks of football aren't worth it. He's not the first, but he is the youngest and the one who has shocked a country that is still actively resisting the idea of putting their health first until it's too late. There is an important distinction between a young athlete protecting himself and an aging athlete trying to preserve whatever brain function he has left. It's an example of a new mindset, one concerned with health and armed with more information than ever before.

The Football-Concussion Connection

Common sense says that being hit over the head with a heavy object is not a good idea. It follows that the effect of football on players has been a concern for a long time, but determining the level of damage and consequences of repeated trauma has been harder to do. In 1994, the NFL formed the Mild

Traumatic Brain Injury Committee, paying lip service to health concerns over players and giving the NFL the opportunity to control the concussion narrative.

Athletes who are willing to ignore, or those who don’t know, the long-term health effects of what they’re doing are essential to the financial well being of professional football. The growing wealth of information available on concussions and brain health is available to anyone with the Internet, and it’s impossible to avoid the identification of sports and football as a major cause of these issues. The Internet’s ability to disseminate information has taken the latter away from the NFL, and the public and players are beginning to ask if football is worth the health risks. It’s also posed the question of trust. Are the people receiving the financial benefits from a 9 billion industry really the ones players should trust to care for them and their quality of life?

Degenerative Brain Disease Links

A concussion is an injury to the head that leads to a temporary loss of brain function. While the effects of a mild concussion are usually temporary, people who have had a concussion are more likely to suffer from another, and the damage from repeated brain injuries does accumulate. Recent research has found that NFL players who have suffered from multiple concussions have increased rates of memory and attention deficits and are more likely to develop Parkinson and Alzheimer like symptoms. Older athletes who experienced concussions were tested. It was found that the cortex had thinned, which combined with the presence of abnormal proteins in the brain, echoes the brains of those with Alzheimer’s. Technology has made studies like this possible and provides a great resource for people who are concerned about the effects of playing an aggressive and violent sport like football.

Degenerative Disease Can Strike Anyone's Brain

There are a few ways to look at these findings. An increasing number of players are retiring while they are still relevant and able to play at a high level. Chris Borland, Patrick Willis, and others are hanging up their cleats early because they feel like the game is no longer worth the health risks. On the flip side, playing sports professionally is a huge opportunity for others, and trading their potential quality of life in their later years for the shot at sports fame and fortune is something they're willing to do. Concussions can have a serious effect on the brain. As people weigh the benefits of football against the costs, more people, especially parents, are deciding that it's simply not worth it.

For more on brain health, intelligence, and for repairing brain damage, check out Increase Your IQ With The Right Foods, Herbs, and Vitamins (check out the brain tonic recipe).

Further Reading:

- *Candida and Depression*
- *How Insomnia Leads to a Filthy Mind*
- *Increase Your IQ With The Right Foods, Herbs, and Vitamins*

Sources:

- *49ers player retires at age 24, says football isn't 'worth the risk' in groundbreaking decision* – Business Insider
- *How do you determine that an athlete is OK to Return to Play?* – Concussion Treatment
- *Chris Borland's retirement shows concussion awareness makes a difference* – Chicago Tribune

- *Tom Brady's Balls: Why They Matter* – Natural News
- *Concussions Cause Long-Term Effects Lasting Decades* – Medical News Today