

The value of balance assessment measurements in identifying and monitoring acute postural instability among concussed athletes.

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Abstract

CLINICAL SCENARIO:

Sport-related concussions are a significant health issue due to the high incidence of concussions sustained each sports season. Current approaches to the evaluation of acutely concussed athletes include the use of balance assessments to identify and monitor underlying postural instability arising from concussion. Balance assessment has been recommended as a primary measurement tool for monitoring recovery and for making return-to-play decisions. Balance impairments have been shown to occur in the initial postconcussion period (ie, 1-10 d). Numerous clinical and laboratory measures have been used in the assessment of balance immediately after concussion, and clinicians are faced with deciding which measures to use.

FOCUSED CLINICAL QUESTION:

How do clinical or field-based balance-assessment tools compare to laboratory-based balance measures in identifying deficits in postural stability among acutely concussed athletes?