

Jump Height

Jump height measures the maximum vertical displacement of the center of mass and is a critical assessment of lower-body neuromuscular power and explosive performance, central to sports such as basketball and volleyball (Eythorsdottir et al., 2024; Sanders et al., 2024). Values of jump height vary by gender and sport type. The average jump height for a normal male ranges around 0.4–0.5 m, while for a normal female it is about 0.3–0.4 m. For athletes, male values increase to 0.6–0.7 m and female athletes average between 0.5–0.6 m (Kons et al., 2018). Jump height is important for athletic performance because it reflects an athlete's ability to generate rapid, high-force movements essential for jumping, sprinting, and changing direction. Existing research highlights a strong correlation between vertical jump height and lower-body propulsive power, which underpins performance in both linear speed and agility tests (Kons et al., 2018).

Accurate and standardized jump height calculation methods are necessary, as discrepancies among measurement techniques can affect data interpretation and athlete monitoring (Kozinc & Pleša, 2022). Furthermore, longitudinal monitoring reveals significant positional differences in jump loads and force-velocity profiles, especially in sports like volleyball where different positions show varied neuromuscular fatigue and training demands (Sanders et al., 2024).

Research gaps include limited studies on jump height metrics in certain sports and populations such as female athletes and youth players. There are unexplored relationships between jump height and injury risk, particularly concerning how fatigue-related reductions in jump performance may indicate injury susceptibility. Comparing jump height and related force-velocity metrics across teams and playing positions is a promising area to develop individualized fatigue management and injury prevention strategies.

Peak Propulsive Force

Peak Propulsive Force (PPF) is the maximum forward-directed force produced during push-off in self-initiated walking, indicating when one actively propels themselves ahead (Hsiao et al., 2016a). Unlike overall ground reaction force measurements, which include braking and non-propulsive components, PPF isolates the true propulsive force responsible for moving the body forward during walking tasks at a specified pace (Hsiao et al., 2016a; Hsiao et al., 2016b).

PPF is an essential measure of functional mobility because it indicates propulsion efficiency, making it one of the most important factors to consider in gait functionality and rehabilitation (Hsiao et al., 2016b). Older people frequently have decreased PPF due to age-related plantarflexor inefficiencies, although techniques like real-time feedback training have been demonstrated to enhance propulsive capacity and walking performance (Franz et al., 2014).

While much study has focused on the value of PPF in clinical and elderly populations, recent studies have broadened its scope to include muscle activation patterns and propulsion efficiency

(Tomaz et al., 2024). Future objectives include investigating its significance in overall mobility outcomes and injury prevention, notably through propulsion-focused training regimens in gait rehabilitation.

Total Distance

Total distance measures the cumulative ground an athlete covers during a training session or competition (Mujika, 2017; McKay et al., 2025; Kupperman et al., 2020). It quantifies overall external workload, reflecting the volume of physical activity and providing a foundational measure for assessing the metabolic and aerobic demands placed on the athlete. This metric is vital for athletic performance as it aids in planning and periodizing training loads, ensuring athletes build endurance while minimizing risks of overtraining and injury. Accurate monitoring of total distance enables coaches to tailor workloads for optimal performance outcomes and recovery (Mujika, 2017). Normal or elite values of total distance vary significantly by sport and position. For example, elite soccer players may cover distances ranging from 7 to 13 kilometers per match, depending on their tactical role and fitness level. Due to sport-specific movement demands, these values differ substantially across disciplines, necessitating contextual interpretation (McKay et al., 2025).

Research on total distance remains limited in certain sports, particularly those with varying movement patterns like combat sports or intermittent play sports beyond the mainstream team sports. Additionally, while total distance is commonly reported, its integration with intensity metrics such as accelerations, decelerations, and high-speed running remains an area ripe for further exploration (Kupperman et al., 2020). Unexplored relationships include the detailed connection between total distance and injury risk. While large increases in total distance can contribute to injury likelihood, especially without appropriate progression, granular studies distinguishing how total distance combined with intensity markers affects tissue loading and injury are sparse (Kupperman et al., 2020). Comparing total distance across teams and positions offers novel insights. Variability in distance covered by position within a team reflects differing physical demands, which can inform position-specific training and injury prevention strategies. Cross-team comparisons might also reveal how tactical styles influence workload, enabling tailored performance and recovery plans (McKay et al., 2025; Mujika, 2017).

Accumulated Acceleration Load

Accumulated Acceleration Load (AAL) is the overall neuromuscular stress that an athlete feels by adding instantaneous accelerations across the X, Y, and Z axes, capturing quick speed changes, collisions, landings, and direction shifts (Freitas et al., 2025). These high-impact, eccentric, and quasi-isometric actions—such as deceleration, cutting, and jump landings—are substantially associated with fatigue, tissue strain, and injury risk (Svilar et al., 2018). Because AAL is stated in system-specific arbitrary units, it is best suited for monitoring inside an athlete

or team rather than cross-team comparisons. Basketball research suggests that AAL is responsive to contextual intensity, with collegiate athletes exhibiting much higher values when competing against professional-level opponents (Freitas et al., 2025).

Studies in basketball, handball, and other indoor sports regularly verify accelerometer-derived load measures as useful markers of mechanical stress and neuromuscular demands (Luteberget & Spencer, 2017; Svilar et al., 2018). AAL captures the accumulated "wear and tear" of quick accelerations and decelerations that typical distance metrics miss, making it useful for workload management and injury risk monitoring. When combined with internal load metrics such as session RPE, it provides a more comprehensive view of training stress, athlete preparation, and recovery requirements (Boyd et al., 2011; Fox et al., 2019; Kinexon Sports, 2024).

Left/Right Max Force

The Limb Symmetry Index (LSI), calculated as $(\text{stronger limb} - \text{weaker limb}) \div \text{stronger limb} \times 100\%$, measures inter-limb deficits in a unilateral isometric assessment. The maximal force is the most voluntary force that each limb is capable of producing. These are significant measurements because unilateral maximum force is highly related to sprint acceleration, jump performance, direction change ability, and overall injury avoidance (Freitas et al., 2025). According to Parkinson et al. (2021), asymmetries greater than ~10-15% increase the risk of injury and reduce performance. The LSI of $\geq 90\%$ is often used to determine clearance for return to sport (Freitas et al., 2025). Ongoing analysis for normative data across genders, sports, and competitive levels is underway, as well as how inequalities impact performance (Sanders et al., 2024).

New research indicates that measuring recovery only on similar strength between limbs can make someone appear more recovered than they are. Wellsandt et al. (2017) found that measures of limb symmetry index (LSI) frequently underestimated quadriceps performance after ACL reconstruction and predicted re-injury risk. Kotsifaki et al. (2022) found that while athletes were approximately 97% symmetrical in horizontal hop distance, they were consistently asymmetrical in single-leg vertical jump performance (83%) and drop-jump performance (77%), indicating overall force and joint-work deficits. These findings highlight that, while maximal force and LSI are relevant and accurate, a more complete assessment of inter-limb balance should incorporate other biomechanical variables such as rate of force development, vertical-jump asymmetries, and/or joint moments, or biomechanical burden.

Research Gaps and Questions

- Accumulated Acceleration Load research can advance by exploring threshold values linked directly to overuse injuries and fatigue across different sports and gender.

- Max force research would benefit from expanded normative databases across competitive levels and sports, including pediatric and female populations.
- Investigating interaction effects between LSI, force output, and neuromuscular fatigue or recovery would advance injury prevention.
- Novel approaches could compare accumulated acceleration load and force asymmetries across positions within teams to optimize individual workload prescriptions.

1. How do interactions between jump height, peak propulsive force, and accumulated acceleration load predict neuromuscular fatigue and injury risk across different athlete positions?
2. How do changes in jump height during a training cycle indicate early signs of neuromuscular fatigue or injury susceptibility in collegiate athletes?
3. What is the relationship between peak propulsive force during gait and lower-body explosive performance (e.g., vertical jump height) in healthy young athletes?
4. How does the combination of total distance and high-intensity accelerations predict weekly fatigue levels in team sport athletes?
5. Which workload metric—jump height, peak propulsive force, total distance, or accumulated acceleration load—is the strongest predictor of neuromuscular fatigue in collegiate athletes?

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