

BEHIND THE GAME: FOOTBALL INJURIES



What parts of the body are most injured?



Football is the world's most popular sport, with tens of thousands of professional athletes competing in leagues and tournaments around the globe every year. But it's not all fun and games, professional football comes with its fair share of risks. On average, players experience injuries about twice annually. Ever wondered which parts of the body are most vulnerable? The chart above breaks down the distribution of injuries by body part over the years. As you can see, the knee is the most commonly injured area, accounting for more than a quarter of all reported injuries. Ouch!

Which positions are most often injured?

As expected, goalkeepers statistically suffer the fewest injuries, which may be related to the much lower intensity of play in this position compared to field players. Side midfielders get seriously injured about 4 times. Interestingly, the second striker suffers the most injuries on average, probably due to heavy clashes with defenders. However this is a rare position, as most teams play with 2 wingers and a central striker. For other positions 5 - 6 serious injuries is the average.

Average number of serious injuries in career by player's position



Number of Injuries

- (3, 3.5] ● (4, 4.5] ● (5, 5.5] ● (8, 8.5]
- (3.5, 4] ● (4.5, 5] ● (5.5, 6]

GK - Goalkeeper

CB - Centre-Back

LB - Left-Back

RB - Right-Back

CDM - Central Defensive Midfielder

CM - Central Midfielder

LM - Left Midfielder

RM - Right Midfielder

CAM - Central Attacking Midfielder

LW - Left Winger

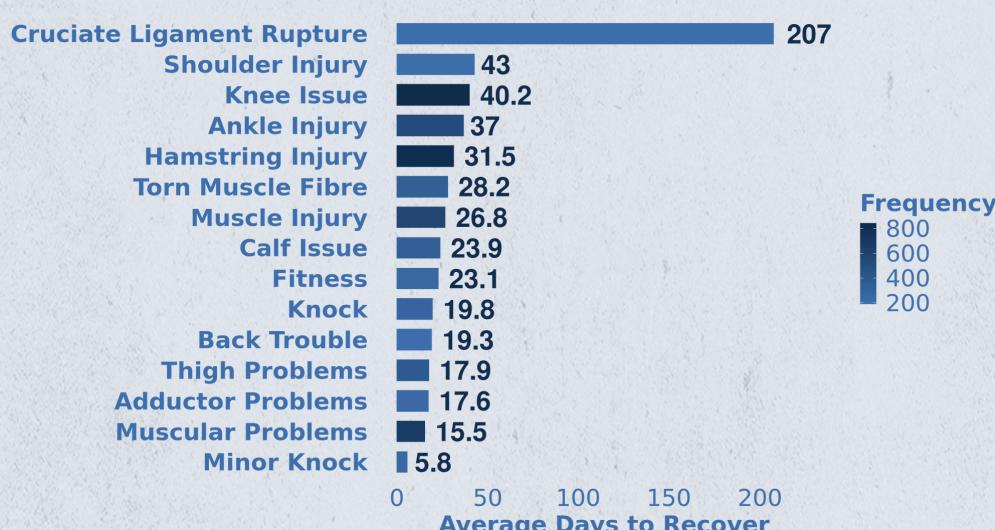
RW - Right Winger

CF - Centre-Forward

SS - Second Striker

How long does it take to recover?

The most perilous injury for a football player is undoubtedly an ACL rupture. However, shoulder injuries surprisingly follow closely behind. It's quite astonishing that athletes can incur injuries during seemingly innocuous fitness exercises, often requiring a three-week recovery period.



Are old footballers more likely to get injured?

The plot demonstrates a significant association between age and knee injuries, with the highest frequency observed in players aged 25 and above. It is noteworthy that younger players exhibit a higher incidence of illness, potentially linked to lifestyle factors.

