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Unit 1 Project

Concussions in football have become an epidemic in the football community and has become a popular subject to talk about amongst the media, football fans, players, coaches, and parents of America. Recently the National Football League (NFL) has been under a lot of scrutiny for not protecting their players properly and not letting them know about concussions sooner. Many former players who played in the NFL have had many problems mentally ever since they have retired from NFL, such as former NFL player Junior Seau who committed suicide on May 2, 2012. In an autopsy, it was later revealed that Seau was suffering from Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) which is a disease that develops in the brain due to many concussions sustained over time from constant blows to the head. Now the players (current and former) are feeling like the NFL has known about the dangers of concussions for a long time and have failed to notify, educate, and protect their players.

A concussion is when the brain receives impact from a force or hit; you could get a concussion from many different aspects of life, but football has been considered a huge sport where concussions occur frequently. Concussions cannot be proven through a MRI or X-Ray. But concussions come with many symptoms that could come within minutes of sustaining one, or hours after. There are many symptoms which include: "Dizziness, Balance problems, Headache, being sensitive to light or noise" (BIANJ 2015). Due to sustaining multiple concussions overtime, players can typically develop many brain diseases such as CTE in their 40's and beyond. So now the NFL has been sued by a lot of their former players because the players claim that the NFL knew of the dangers of concussions long ago and are just now addressing concussions or trying to prevent them.

Now that addressing concussions is in the limelight, there are many things you can do to help lower the risk of concussions. But there still will always be a chance of you sustaining a concussion when playing football. If you are having concussion-like symptoms or think you may have a concussion, you should: "Go to the doctor, get physical rest, take cognitive tests, and also keep a calendar of symptoms and report them to your doctor at follow-up visits" (BIANJ 2015). Even though there is no form or type of equipment that can stop you from sustaining a concussion, there are many things you can do and wear to prevent concussions or at least, lessen your chance of sustaining them. A big way you can keep your brain safe is to keep your head up while performing a tackle or block on another player. A lot of players now-a-days lead with the crown of their helmet and some end up getting a concussion as a result of them lowering their head. Some like former Rutgers linebacker Eric LeGrand, have experience far worse consequences for tackling with the crown of their helmet. LeGrand had sustained an injury to his spinal cord from the tackle and had become paralyzed

from the waste down. So tackling technique is a huge way to prevent concussions and further injury. Equipment can play a big role in concussions as well. Many helmet companies such as Riddell and Schutt have been working year-to-year by trying to create a newer, safer helmet. By wearing the newest helmets issued, you can help protect your head and brain a lot more.

Concussions are a dangerous injury and can do more damage to your body long-term than any other injury. Pulled muscles, fractured arms, broken collarbones and plenty of other injuries can heal. But concussions that are not treated can hurt your brain mentally over a long period of time and definitely in your life once football is over. There are many helmets that are made that can promise you that they are safer than other helmets, but right now there is no such helmet that can keep anyone from having a 0% chance of sustaining a concussion. When you play the game of football there is not much you can do to save yourself from being 100% safe from concussions, but you can do a lot of things right and wear the correct and safest equipment to better your chances. The only thing anyone can do to stop them from sustaining a concussion from playing football is to not play football at all. When someone signs up to play football, injuries and concussions are a big thing that comes as a risk when you play this sport.