

Player Research Invitation

Objective: Research study of health and substance use in the NFL

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Players supporting this study: Derrick Morgan, Eugene Monroe, Jake Plummer

Rationale: Two major issues relating to substance use/misuse and health are developing in the U.S. First, there is an epidemic of prescription opioid misuse that is causing a tremendous public health and societal burden. Second, there has been a paradigm shift in attitudes regarding the use of cannabinoids (cannabis, marijuana, hemp oil, etc.) for both medical and non-medical purposes. Extensive media attention has been focused on both topics within the NFL, with increasing concern about substance use/misuse among current and former players.

With emerging evidence about both the harms associated with opioid use and potential benefits of cannabinoids for pain and inflammation, some players have called for the NFL to re-evaluate its policy regarding cannabinoid use and the current practices surrounding opioid use. However, there is a lack of data to provide a good evaluation of either, and the relative safety and efficacy of cannabinoids versus opioids for pain management and injury recovery, or the impact of cannabinoid use on frequency and amount of opioid use is not currently known.

Purpose of this study: (1) Quantify medication/substance use among players, with special emphasis on opioid and cannabinoid use, during an NFL season; (2) Track injuries, timetable of recovery, type and severity of associated symptoms, and course of treatments utilized by players during the season; (3) Evaluate how general health (e.g. mood, sleep, stress) relates to cannabinoid and opioid use.

Who we need: Anyone currently on an active roster is invited to participate in the study. It is not important if you use prescription opioids, cannabinoids, or choose alternative treatments for pain/injuries, all active players are eligible. If you elect to participate, we will ask you to complete an online survey once during pre-season (about 90 minutes), once per week during the season (10-15 minutes each), and once at the end of the season (about 90 minutes). Compensation is provided for completing each survey.

Confidentiality: All participants will receive a confidential study ID number at the start of the study. Your name and contact information will not be recorded electronically anywhere and will not be linked to responses you give on the surveys. Your information is protected by federal privacy laws, we have obtained a Certificate of Confidentiality preventing disclosure of your name or survey responses, and the research team will make no disclosures about who participated in the research study. Further, we will not release the responses of any individual; data will only be presented as aggregate sums/averages to prevent personal identification.

JOIN THE STUDY!! To join the study, please call Dr. Ryan Vandrey, Principal Investigator, at 410-550-4036 or e-mail him at rvandrey@jhmi.edu.