

SSC08-02

Reduced Cerebral Blood Flow Detected after Clinical Recovery in Acute Sports-related Concussion

Monday 10:40-10:50 AM | SSC08-02 | NA

PURPOSE

Sport-related concussion (SRC) is a major health problem, affecting millions of people each year. While the clinical effects of SRC (e.g., symptoms and impairments in neuropsychological functioning) typically resolve within several days, increasing evidence suggests persistent neurophysiological abnormalities beyond the point of clinical recovery after injury. This study was aimed to evaluate cerebral blood flow (CBF) changes in acute SRC, as measured using advanced arterial spin labeling (ASL) MRI.

METHOD AND MATERIALS

We compared CBF maps assessed using 3D pCASL (pseudo continuous ASL) MRI in 18 concussed football players (age 17.8 \pm 1.5 years) obtained within 24 hours and at 8 days after injury, in comparison to a control group of 19 matched non-concussed football players at the same interval. Clinical assessments including the Sport Concussion Assessment Tool 3 (SCAT3) and Standardized Assessment of Concussion (SAC) were obtained at each time point.

RESULTS

While the control group did not show any changes in CBF between the two time points, concussed athletes demonstrated a significant decrease in CBF at 8 days relative to 24 hours ($p < 0.01$, FWE corrected). Moreover, scores on the clinical symptom (SCAT3) and cognitive (SAC) measures demonstrated significant impairment (versus pre-season baseline levels) at 24 hours (SCAT $p < 0.0001$, SAC $p < 0.01$) but returned to baseline levels at 8 days.

CONCLUSION

Our preliminary results suggest that advanced ASL MRI method might be useful for detecting and tracking the longitudinal course of underlying neurophysiological recovery from concussive injury.

CLINICAL RELEVANCE/APPLICATION

Abnormal CBF was found using 3D pCASL MRI in acute concussed patients even after clinical recovery, which might have important implication for clinical decisions on return-to-play after concussion.