

Student Athletes Emulate the Pros in Abusing Prescription Painkillers

NewsUSA

(NU) - Sometimes we're so caught up in all the pro sports stars whose lives have been wrecked by misusing prescription painkillers that we forget the problem extends down to the amateur level.

And, yes, that does mean college and even high-school sports.

At least one study put the number of college student athletes who've used prescription medications to enhance their performance at as high as 53.3 percent. And another recent study on high school athletes, published online in the *Journal of Child & Adolescent Substance Abuse*, reported that 12 percent of male seniors and 8 percent of female seniors admitted to abusing painkillers.

To former ESPN.com columnist Gregg Easterbrook – who wrote about painkillers in his book *“The King of Sports: Football’s Impact on America”* – it’s no surprise that the largest percentage of those young abusers play football.

“Youth and high-school players see an example that appears to be of men so tough, they laugh at pain,” he wrote. “The message sent is that young players should use their own bodies recklessly.”

So what’s a concerned parent to do?



Alternatives like chiropractic care can help youths experiencing chronic pain.

Well, if your child is experiencing neuro-musculoskeletal-related pain from playing sports – spinal pain, say, from too many tackles or strained soccer kicks – first know that the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention last March began urging physicians to avoid prescribing opioids for chronic pain in response to a record high 28,647 deaths involving the highly addictive drugs in 2014.

Know, too, that the most popular non-pharmacologic alternative to routine care is drug-free chiropractic care.

“Doctors of chiropractic play a key role in sports health care by providing hands-on care that help improve range of motion, flexibility, muscle strength, and other key performance factors,” notes the not-for-profit Foundation for Chiropractic Progress’ Sherry McAllister.