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Australia aims at developing quick test to tackle concussion

August 17, 2021 | News

Using advanced MRI to collect data on mild traumatic brain injuries



Athletes are helping a University of Queensland neuroscientist tackle the problem of concussion in sport head-on with the aim of developing a quick and cheap test measuring brain recovery.

Dr Fatima Nasrallah from UQ's Queensland Brain Institute in Australia is using advanced MRI to collect data on mild traumatic brain injuries to give certainty to when an athlete's brain has fully recovered and it is safe to resume play.

Her aim is to identify biomarkers specific to the brain that can be easily monitored to distinguish whether there is a brain injury or when the brain has fully recovered.

"There is now evidence to show that repetitive injury causes long-term consequences with the developing brain especially vulnerable, so it is essential that we have all the information possible to set guidelines to protect our players in both professional and local sports," she said.

"It's challenging for sporting bodies to make policies and guidelines around concussion when there's such a huge gap in knowledge", she added.