Simple 'speed read' app can identify concussion in football

13 December 2018
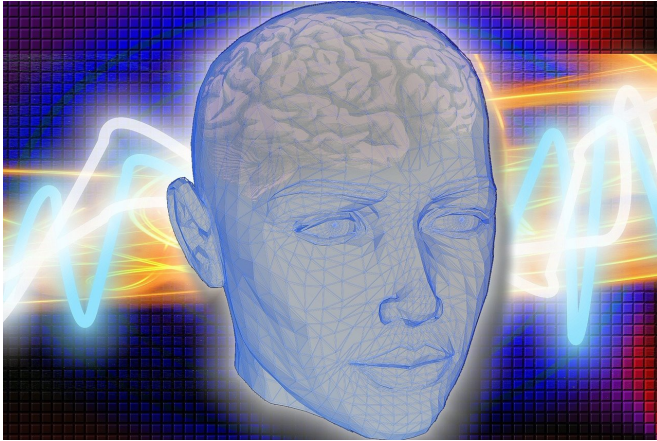
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A simple, fast and effective test to identify concussion in Australian Rules footballers has been investigated in a collaboration between Australian and international researchers.

The app involves a speed-reading test undertaken by a footballer who has received a knock during play.

The study, which was published in the *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport* demonstrated that any reduction in the athlete's speed signals a possible concussion, which could result in further injury if the player is not removed from the game.

Concussion is a serious injury in sports such as the AFL. According to the most recent AFL injury report, each club experienced two concussions during the season.

"These statistics are even more worrying when you consider most people who play footy are at a community level without sideline doctors," says Myles Murphy, a Ph.D. candidate at the University of Notre Dame Australia and sports physiotherapist at the Western Australian Cricket Association.

"The other issue is that sometimes players deny symptoms when questioned, as they don't want to be ruled out. So we need objective tests that don't rely on the symptoms reported by the player.

"We have proven that a simple tablet app can be used to recognise concussion, and we hope this technology assists in making sport safer and can be adopted by sports outside of AFL, such as cricket."

Provided by Freshscience

APA citation: Simple 'speed read' app can identify concussion in football (2018, December 13) retrieved 25 November 2022 from https://medicalxpress.com/news/2018-12-simple-app-concussion-football.html