
Research Report

Effectiveness of FIFA's 11 Exercise Program on the Agility Performance in Young Football PlayersTapas K Pal,¹ MPT; Sourov Saha,¹ MPT¹Assistant Professor, Nopany Institute of Healthcare Studies, Kolkata

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Abstract

Background: "The 11" injury prevention programme was developed by FIFA's medical research centre (F-MARC) to help reduce the risk of injury in adult football players. There is a paucity of evidence regarding the use of injury prevention program for children participating in sport. Thus the objective of this study was to determine the suitability and effectiveness of "The 11" for younger football players and improving their agility performance. **Aims:** To check effectiveness of FIFA's 11 exercise program on the agility performance of young football players under the age group of 11. **Design:** Pre-post experimental design. **Methods:** Fifty [25 experimental (EXP), 25 control (CON)] young football players (age 9.2 ± 1.04 yr) participated. The EXP group followed "The 11" training programme 5 days per week, for 6 weeks, completing all exercises. Prior to, and after the intervention, both EXP and CON groups performed football-specific physical tests. **Statistical analysis:** Changes in performance scores between the groups were compared using independent *t*-tests ($p \leq 0.05$). Number of injuries which occurred during the study in either group was recorded. **Result:** A significant pre post difference in experimental group was seen for Horizontal 3 step jump test and Illinois Agility test ($p < 0.001$). **Conclusion:** Given the observed improvements in the agility performance with physical abilities and perceived benefits of "The 11", it would appear that the program is appropriate and should be included in the training of young football players, for both physical development and potential injury

prevention purposes.

Key words: Agility, Injury, Football, Children, Prevention.

Introduction

Physical activity plays a significant role in the well-being of a child. A well-designed exercise program enhances the immediate physical, psychometric and intellectual attainments of a child. Long-term health benefits depend on continuation of the physical activity, thus enhancing well-being and favouring the balanced development of a child.¹ Agility is described "a rapid whole body movement with change of velocity or direction in response to a stimulus". Agility has relationships with trainable physical qualities such as strength, power and technique, as well as cognitive components such as visual scanning techniques, visual scanning speed and anticipation. Agility testing is generally confined to tests of physical components such as change of direction speed, or cognitive components such as anticipation and pattern recognition. Agility as is related to running sports such as football, researchers addressed the multi-faceted influences involved in agility performance.²

At a young age, sports are for enjoyment and for health and personal development. Subsequently, young athletes train harder and longer and participate in sports throughout the whole year. As an undesired but inevitable consequence, sports-related injuries have increased significantly.