

THE EFFICACY OF THE 11 AND THE 11 + α IN INJURY PREVENTION AND PHYSICAL FITNESS IN MALE COLLEGIATE FOOTBALL TEAMS

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Introduction: “The 11” and “The 11+” are accepted effective injury-prevention training programs for junior football players. However, their impact on physical fitness is unclear. The aim of this study was to elucidate the effectiveness of “The 11” and “The 11 + α ” in injury prevention and physical fitness improvement.

Method: This study included 182 collegiate male football players (The first division of a Japanese collegiate football league), who were divided into 3 groups: “The 11” (n = 62), “The 11 + α ” (n = 60), and “Control” (n = 59). Seventy-seven players were evaluated for physical fitness. “The 11” program, originally developed by FIFA, and “The 11 + α ,” by one of the authors, were conducted once or twice a week for 6 months. “The 11 + α ” focuses on plyometric training and differs slightly from “The 11+.” Injury incidence rates during football (game and training), game, and training were reported as the number of injuries per 1000 player-hours (PH). Using several field tests (sprint, pro-agility, bounding, and balance), each subject’s physical fitness level was evaluated prior to and 6 months after training.

Results: The incidence rates during football, game, and training were 3.62, 19.18, and 2.58 injuries/PH in the “Control” group, 2.27, 11.92, and 1.53 injuries/PH in “The 11” group, and 2.24, 10.75, and 1.75 injuries/PH in “The 11 + α ” group, respectively. The injury incidence rate during football was significantly lower in both the training groups than in the “Control” group ($p < 0.05$). Pro-agility time was significantly decreased in both training groups than in the “Control” groups ($p < 0.05$). Balance ability improved significantly only in the “The 11” group ($p < 0.05$).

Conclusion: “The 11” and “The 11 + α ” were effective in injury prevention and physical fitness improvement.