

CASE REPORT

POSTERIOR STERNOCLAVICULAR JOINT DISLOCATION
IN A DIVISION I FOOTBALL PLAYER: A CASE REPORTMario F. Cruz, PT, DPT, SCS, ATC¹Joe Erdeljac, MS, ATC, LAT²Richard Williams, MD, MS³Mike Brown, MA, ATC, LAT⁴Lori Bolgla, PT, PhD, MAcc, ATC⁵

ABSTRACT

Posterior dislocation of the sterno-clavicular (SC) joint is a rare injury in athletes. It normally occurs in high collision sports such as American football or rugby. Acute posterior dislocations of the SC joint can be life-threatening as the posteriorly displaced clavicle can cause damage to vital vascular and respiratory structures such as the aortic arch, the carotid and subclavian arteries, and the trachea. The potential severity of a posterior SC joint dislocation provides multiple challenges for clinicians involved in the emergency care and treatment of this condition. Integration of clinical examination observations, rapid critical thinking, and appropriate diagnostic imaging are often required to provide the best management and outcome for the injured athlete. The criterion for return-to-play and participation in collision sports after suffering a posterior dislocation of the SC joint are unclear due to the rarity of this injury. The purpose of this case report is to describe the management, from the initial on-field evaluation through the return-to-sport, of a collegiate Division I football player following a traumatic sports-related posterior SC joint dislocation. The rehabilitation process and the progression to return to participation are also presented and briefly discussed.

Level of Evidence: 4-Single case report

Key Words: Athletes, shoulder rehabilitation, sterno-clavicular joint dislocation

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