

# It's Time to Find a **CURE** for **CONCUSSIONS**



**BY MICHAEL WYAND, DVM, PHD  
AND CHRIS NOWINSKI, PHD**

**C**hronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE), a neurodegenerative disease caused by repeated head impacts, has become part of the national conversation as it continues to be diagnosed after death in over 90% of former NFL players studied. NFL stars continued to be sidelined with concussions in the 2019 season, but the conversation rarely goes beyond when they can return to play. The true cost of football and other contact sports on athletes, especially our most vulnerable, children, can sometimes get lost.

The Concussion Legacy Foundation recently gained new insight into the costs of concussions when we started a national helpline to provide family members with one-on-one support. Despite all the attention given to CTE, two-thirds of requests for help are in an area we hear significantly less about — post-concussion syndrome (PCS), or persistent post-concussion symptoms that last months, or even years.

For all the progress we've made on concussion education, policy, and prevention, post-concussion syndrome still afflicts up to 20% of concussion victims each year. With nearly four million concussions from sports and recreation activities alone each year, this is a significant public health problem.

PCS describes a constellation of difficult symptoms that may include chronic headaches, depression, cognitive, memory, vision and balance issues, as well as sleep disorders. A recent study found that only 27% of the PCS patients studied recovered fully, meaning a striking 73% had symptoms that never went away. Even among those who did recover, one-third took longer than a year.

## **Patients and their families need better answers.**

Over the past decade, we've seen amazing results from the world of medical research and development. All sorts of maladies and conditions have been cured or abated in our lifetimes, yet concussion treatment is still primitive compared to therapies for other medical issues. The standard of care for concussions today is effectively the same as it was decades ago — a period of rest, rehabilitation, if needed, and progressive return to

life and activity. Scant resources have been dedicated to finding treatments for concussions, despite the human and economic toll. A 2003 CDC report estimated that concussions/mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBI), cost the U.S. nearly \$17 billion each year.

## **We need to accelerate the development of medical treatments for concussions.**

Medical treatment for those suffering from concussions is not science fiction, nor is it something for which we need to wait twenty or thirty years. Several cutting-edge companies are making excellent progress in this field. You may never have heard of Oxeia, Astrocyte, or Pinteon Therapeutics, but they and others are dedicated to lessening concussion symptoms and treating the underlying damage of concussions.

While we must continue to fight for our athletes' well-being with the tools we have at our disposal, we must also raise awareness about potential treatments for brain injuries. The medical establishment, the pharmaceutical industry, government leaders, and investors are needed to help us advance drug research and development so that one day we'll have an effective treatment for concussions. Rest is not enough. The time to devote more resources to support this cutting-edge scientific research is now. We have the ability to deal with this problem; we need the commitment to act. [🔗](#)

**Michael Wyand, DVM, PhD**, is CEO of Oxeia Biopharmaceuticals. Oxeia is conducting Phase 2 human clinical studies for its therapeutic drug, OXE-103, to treat concussions.

**Chris Nowinski, PhD**, is cofounder and CEO of the Concussion Legacy Foundation, cofounder of the Veterans Affairs-Boston University-CLF Brain Bank and an advisor to Oxeia Biopharmaceuticals. A former All-Ivy defensive tackle for Harvard University and WWE professional wrestler, he suffers from PCS symptoms 16 years later.

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