



Our Mission:

To accelerate the development of treatments and a cure while working to improve the lives of those living with Ataxia.

Understanding concussion-related ataxia - Press Kit NFL adds ataxia to concussion protocol

What is ataxia?

Ataxia describes an impairment of coordinated movement resulting from brain or nerve dysfunction. Many symptoms of ataxia mimic the effects of excessive drinking. Ataxia is common in individuals who have a head injury, such as a severe concussion. The ataxia symptoms resulting from concussion can be short- or long-term.

Ataxia symptoms:

- Gait abnormalities
- Slurred speech
- Eye movement abnormalities
- Poor balance
- Trouble eating and swallowing
- Tremors
- Lack of coordination
- Deterioration of fine motor skills

"Ataxia is an under-recognized sign of neurological dysfunction. The NFL's formal acknowledgment of ataxia as a possible sign of head trauma should lead to reduced risk of permanent damage for NFL players. It also has the added benefit of shining a public spotlight on other diseases that have ataxia as one of their primary features."

*-Dr. George Wilmot III
Assoc. Prof. of Neurology, Emory University
NAF Medical & Research Advisory Board*

"Ataxia symptoms can greatly impact an individual's ability to perform everyday tasks, including the ability to walk, talk, eat, and work. Regardless of whether ataxia arises in a professional athlete or a friend or family member, it is important to consult a neurologist to understand the underlying causes of symptoms and seek the best treatment options."

*-Lauren Moore, PhD
Chief Scientific Officer, NAF*

About NAF

Ataxia is a rare neurological disease affecting tens of thousands of people in the US and many thousands more around the world. It is progressive, affecting a person's ability to walk, talk, and use fine motor skills. In addition to traumatic brain injury, ataxia can be caused by genetic and autoimmune syndromes, exposure to a toxic substance, vitamin deficiency, or alcoholism. Founded in 1957, NAF is a nonprofit organization established to help persons with Ataxia and their families. The Foundation's vision of a world without Ataxia will be accomplished through its primary programs of funding Ataxia research, providing vital programs and services for Ataxia families, and partnering with pharmaceutical companies in the search for treatments and a cure.

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