Title: Hip Pain in Professional Golfers

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Golf is one of the most popular global sports with an estimated 57 million participants worldwide.1 Biomechanical studies of the hip during a golf swing have shown that the lead hip is subject to large rotational velocities. These forces may predispose the player to hip joint injuries, such as labral tears.2 However, little is known about the prevalence of hip pain amongst professional golfers.

Our aim was to determine the prevalence of hip pain amongst a group of professional golfers, to correlate the findings to clinical examinations and to compare finding between the lead and trail hips.

A team of researchers attended the Scottish Hydro Challenge in 2015 and invited European Challenge Tour players to complete a questionnaire and undergo clinical examinations. Questionnaires determined player demographics, the presence of “hip pain lasting one day or longer over the last month” and an international hip outcome tool 12 score (iHOT12; a hip related quality of life questionnaire) for the right and left hips. Clinical examination determined the presence of localised tenderness, positive flexion adduction internal rotation (FADIR) and flexion abduction external rotation (FABER) impingement tests as well as passive hip joint range of motion.

Of the field of 156 male golfers, 109 (70%) completed questionnaires of which 73 underwent clinical examination. 21 players (19.3%) reported hip pain (11 left, 8 right and 2 bilateral hips). Mean total iHOT12 scores were 90/100 for the left hip and 92 for right hip, with a statistically significant difference on paired t-testing (p=0.03). There were no significant differences on clinical examination between left and right hips.

Approximately 19% of professional golfers are affected by hip pain. Hip pain is more common in the left leg (lead leg), with statistically significant lower hip related quality of life scores for the left hip.

Word count 296

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