



Novel Study Undertaken to Examine the Use of Rigid Knee Braces to Prevent Serious Knee Injuries

- Women Are Three to Eight Times More Likely to Tear Their Anterior Cruciate

Ligaments During Sporting Events -

SAN DIEGO, July 22 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- dj Orthopedics, Inc. (NYSE: DJO), a designer, manufacturer and marketer of products and services for the orthopedic sports medicine market, today announced initiation of a collaborative study with William Garrett, MD, PhD, and Bing Yu, PhD. The study will examine the use of specialized rigid knee braces to prevent Anterior Cruciate Ligament (ACL) injuries in female athletes. The research will be performed at the University of North Carolina and Duke University.

Dr. Garrett's research has focused on exploring solutions to the alarming increase in prevalence of ACL injuries in the United States, especially in women, brought about by an 800 percent increase in sports participation by women since the 1970's. Of the estimated 80,000 to 100,000 ACL tears last year, approximately 70 percent were related to non-contact sports injuries, and studies indicate that women are three to eight times more likely than their male counterparts to sustain them, with the greatest risk among active women in their late teens.

For example, Dr. Garrett and colleagues examined three Division I collegiate basketball conferences consisting of 402 male and 385 female players, reporting 16.1 ACL injuries per 100 females, compared to 2.2 ACL injuries per 100 males, an 8-fold difference.

Researchers note that several factors may contribute to the increased propensity for ACL injuries in women. These factors range from hormonal and anatomical differences to lower hamstring and quadriceps muscle mass and environmental factors. There also may be biomechanical influences at play. Dr. Garrett's research suggests that women are more at risk of sustaining non-contact ACL injuries because they exhibit different movement patterns than men. Dr. Garrett believes that, during cutting and jumping maneuvers, women tend to land with a straighter leg, a recipe for ACL tears. In contrast, men tend to land in more flexed positions, allowing their hamstring and quadriceps muscles to absorb the shock, something a straight-leg position is less likely to accomplish.

Dr. Garrett's study will specifically investigate non-contact injuries, which occur during cutting, jumping, and twisting maneuvers. Sporting events such as basketball, track and field, volleyball, softball and soccer are higher risk activities because they involve these types of movements, placing the athletes who participate in them at the greatest risk of sustaining a serious knee injury.

Dr. Garrett intends to utilize dj Orthopedics' FourcePoint knee brace in his study. This brace utilizes a sophisticated hinge, which applies a gradual and increasing resistance during knee extension. The hypothesis of the study is that this resistance mechanism can increase knee joint flexion, thus reducing injury potential by keeping the leg and knee out of "at risk" positions.

"As the market leader and continual innovator in rigid knee bracing, we feel a strong responsibility to assist in this study," said Les Cross, President and Chief Executive Officer of dj Orthopedics. "ACL injury in the female athlete has reached astounding proportions and we must strive to find a means to reduce this injury rate. It is my hope that dj Orthopedics can play a significant role in reducing the incidence of serious knee injuries in women athletes in the future."

The UNC study will extend a promising FourcePoint pilot study, which Dr. Garrett previously performed. Dr. Garrett concluded that on average, flexion angles are greater when subjects are wearing the FourcePoint brace, thus reducing time in "at risk" positions.

If the UNC study corroborates Dr. Garrett's theory regarding prevention of ACL injuries for women athletes, dj Ortho will seek to provide an enhanced solution in a prophylactic brace, designed specifically as a prevention device.

For more information, members of the press are invited to visit dj Orthopedics' booth (Booth 97 - 99) at the American Orthopedic Society for Sports Medicine (AOSSM) conference held July 20 - 23, 2003 at the San Diego Marriott Hotel & Marina.

About dj Orthopedics, Inc.

dj Orthopedics is a global orthopedic sports medicine company specializing in the design, manufacture and marketing of products and services that rehabilitate soft tissue and bone, help protect against injury, and treat osteoarthritis of the knee. Its broad range of more than 600 existing products, many of which are based on proprietary technologies includes rigid knee braces, soft goods, specialty and other complementary orthopedic products. These products provide solutions for patients and orthopedic sports medicine professionals throughout the patient's continuum of care. More information at www.djortho.com .

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