

UPMC SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM

POST-DOCTORAL FELLOWSHIP IN NEUROPSYCHOLOGY

Established in 2000, the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program currently includes six attending clinical neuropsychologists who work within a multidisciplinary team to assess, diagnose, and treat concussions across the lifespan. This team includes primary care sports medicine, physical medicine and rehabilitation, vestibular rehabilitation, neurosurgery, neuro-radiology, behavioral neuro-optometry, and physical therapy, including both musculoskeletal evaluations and sport-specific exertion therapy.

Under the guidance of Michael “Micky” Collins, PhD, clinical and executive director, the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program sees over 18,000 patient visits, involving more than 8,000 unique patients, each year. The clinical team is involved in the evaluation and management of concussions for athletes at all levels of sports participation, including professional, collegiate, high school, and youth athletes.



The fellowship is a two-year, full-time position adhering to Houston Conference guidelines for hourly clinical training and supervision. Upon completion of fellowship, it is expected that fellows will have the necessary skills

and knowledge base to pursue board certification in clinical neuropsychology. Several prior fellows and current faculty have achieved, or are in the process of achieving, board certification.

Neuropsychology fellow duties primarily consist of brief neuropsychological evaluations of pediatric and adult athletes, along with extended batteries as needed. In addition to serving athletes, the program also receives referrals for neuropsychological evaluations of patients with non-sports-related mild traumatic brain injury (mTBI), as well as other neurologic and psychiatric disorders. There is opportunity for forensic and medico-legal consulting work as well.

The fellow has access to all training activities offered to residents, fellows, and other clinical trainees through the UPMC hospital system, including professional development workshops, seminars, grand rounds, and conferences. Each fellow receives support to travel to and present at one professional conference during each year of their fellowship.

The program is based within the University of Pittsburgh's Department of Orthopaedic Surgery and is housed within clinical space at the UPMC Rooney Sports Complex. The state-of-the-art facility is home to UPMC Freddie Fu Center for Sports Medicine and includes a training and rehabilitation gym with a plyometric training floor, a therapeutic pool, and a specialized performance training center. In addition to this primary location, there are currently five satellite clinics located throughout the Greater Pittsburgh area. Although the fellow rotates through all of the satellite clinics, the UPMC Freddie Fu Center for Sports Medicine is the fellow's home base.

Next door is the UPMC Indoor Training Center, which features a quarter-mile, four-lane running track and full-size practice football field. The climate-controlled facility is utilized by the Pittsburgh Steelers and the University of Pittsburgh Panther football teams, who also occupy the Sports Training Center, which includes team meeting and film viewing rooms, weight training rooms, hydrotherapy facilities, and four 80-yard outdoor fields with observation towers.

CLINICAL TRAINING MODEL



Fellows begin with a one-month training intensive working closely with Dr. Collins and other faculty. Alongside current senior fellows, new junior fellows will become competent with the clinical interview, administration

of the vestibular/ocular-motor screening (VOMS), and interpretation of both computer-based neurocognitive testing and more traditional neuropsychological tools. After the first month, fellows will enter into the regular clinical rotation, in which they will work in some capacity with all faculty members and rotate among the satellite clinics. Fellow offices are located at the UPMC Freddie Fu Center for Sports Medicine, where all fellows have access to all necessary computer equipment and resources.

The educational philosophy of the program is one of scientist-practitioner. The fellowship program emphasizes an evidence-based, patient-centered approach to treatment and recovery, which recognizes that each patient will have a unique clinical presentation and course of recovery. Fellows are expected to spend 80 percent of their time on clinical work and 20 percent of their time focusing on research-related, educational, and outreach activities. Of the 80 percent of time spent on clinical work, approximately 70 percent involves direct face-to-face services with the remaining 10 percent dedicated to report writing, documentation, and supervision. The UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Fellowship Program is a member of APPIC (Member Code #9139). The fellowship program meets hourly requirements for clinically supervised practice in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

Clinical Experiences

Although fellows spend the majority of their time in clinic, there are a number of additional clinical learning experiences available. Clinical opportunities within the Department of Neurosurgery include weekly teaching case conferences, didactic lectures, and morbidity and mortality conferences. In addition, David Okonkwo, MD, PhD, clinical director of the Brain Trauma Research Center and director of the neurotrauma program in the Department of Neurosurgery, invites all fellows to join him and his team, along with members of rehabilitation medicine, for weekly Rehab Rounds at the Neurotrauma ICU. Weekly brain cuttings are also offered through the Department of Neuropathology.

Evaluation of Fellows

Fellows receive formal evaluations from all supervisors up to four times per academic year. In addition, the fellow will meet with both the Training Director, Clinical/Executive Director, and Research Director twice per year for a general overview of their performance and supervisors' feedback. Fellows will be provided with a specific plan to improve upon areas needing improvement if necessary. Formal due process procedures are in place for both the fellow and the training program regarding problem situations.

Learning Experiences

The following experiences are available to all postdoctoral fellows, who are encouraged to be active and engaged in the research process, and take advantage of available opportunities.

Monthly Grand Rounds – Presentations by nationally recognized speakers in the area of concussion and mTBI. Previous speakers have included: Steve Broglio, PhD, John Leddy, MD, David Howell, PhD, Jaclyn Caccese, PhD, Chris Giza, MD, Mike McCrea, PhD, and Grant Iverson, PhD. Junior and Senior fellows also present their own research projects at the Lightning Grand Rounds sessions each spring.

Monthly Clinical Case Conference – Variety of topics related to clinical care, as well as case presentations with round table case conceptualization discussion.

Monthly Research Meeting – Research Director, Fellow Research Coordinator, research faculty, and/or the research post-doctoral fellow direct monthly research didactics for all fellows which cover topics including research ethics/IRB training, statistics/research design, journal article and grant writing, presentation development, and critical examination of current research trends in the field. Fellows are expected to share research ideas and current projects, and will receive feedback from both peers and supervisors.

Monthly Journal Club – Discussion of timely articles and topics related to the clinical care of patients with concussion and cutting-edge research on concussion and TBI.

Mentored Research Opportunities in the Concussion Research Lab – Participation in mentored research activities, including subject recruitment and consent, data collection, entry and analysis, study design, and development of papers and presentations. In Year 1 of the fellowship, fellows will lead one or more research projects involving pre-existing data, culminating in professional presentations and peer-reviewed manuscript submissions. In Year 2, fellows will lead original, prospective research projects for which they will propose a study design; complete University of Pittsburgh IRB approval; collect/enter/analyze data; present and write a manuscript for publication in a peer-reviewed journal.

CITI IRB and COI Training – All fellows will complete University of Pittsburgh CITI human subjects IRB and COI training modules prior to being involved in research.

Clinical Translational Science Institute (CTSI) – Fellows will have the opportunity to attend training, seminars, and courses in clinical and translational research through the University of Pittsburgh's CTSI programs.

Research Readings – Fellows will be assigned a comprehensive digital packet of current, peer-reviewed readings at the start of their fellowship. The readings are designed to orient fellows to the current state of research and clinical practice in the field with an emphasis on our clinical profiles model and targeted, active treatment approach that forms the basis for their clinical work during the fellowship. In addition, fellows are encouraged to read the book, "Concussion: A Clinical Profile Approach to Assessment and Treatment," by Drs. Kontos and Collins.

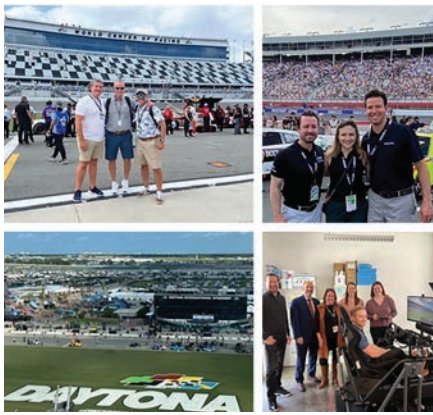
Journal Reviews – Fellows will have the opportunity to serve as mentored reviewers with faculty for approximately three to four peer-review journal submissions in sports medicine, psychology, neurology, and related fields per year. At the conclusion of the two-year fellowship, fellows will typically have completed four to eight mentored reviews.

Professional Presentations – Fellows are encouraged to participate in the development and delivery of professional, peer-reviewed research presentations at national, regional, and local conferences. As a goal, fellows are encouraged to participate in two to four presentations per year, with at least one as the primary presenter. Support is provided for fellows to attend and present at one national conference (e.g., SNS, INS, NAN, APA) each year of their fellowship. In fact, numerous previous concussion fellows have been awarded best trainee abstract/presentation awards by SNS, ACSM, and other organizations. Fellows present annually at our Concussion Lightning Grand Rounds each April or May, as well as at department and college symposia, and national conferences. Our fellows have won numerous awards for the presentations at local, regional, and national conferences. At the conclusion of the two-year fellowship, fellows will typically have completed four to eight professional presentations.



Professional Publications – Fellows are encouraged to participate in the development of professional, peer-reviewed research papers, book chapters, and review articles. As a goal, fellows are encouraged to participate in two to four papers per year, with at least one as the first author. At the conclusion of the two-year fellowship, fellows will typically have co-authored four to eight peer-reviewed publications.

Relationship with NASCAR



The UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program has developed a growing relationship with NASCAR through frequent evaluation of some of the sport's most prominent drivers. Fellows will have the opportunity to participate in the evaluation of drivers under the supervision of Dr. Collins. In addition, opportunities

are available to conduct clinical research on the effects of concussion on driving using a state-of-the-art driving simulator in the Concussion Research Lab, and travel to NASCAR for outreach, research, and fundraising events to represent the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program.

UPMC Concussion Network in Ireland



In 2017, our program launched the UPMC Concussion Network, expanding our clinical model on the international stage by establishing six clinic locations and a research presence in Ireland.

Drs. Collins and Kontos provide regular supervision and trainings to the lead healthcare professionals for each of the Ireland locations. In 2017 and again in 2022, Drs. Collins and Kontos and other members of our team presented multiple invited lectures across Ireland including keynote lectures for the Concussion in Sport National Conversation meeting in Dublin. In 2024, the UPMC Sports Surgery Clinic (SSC) in Santry, Dublin, which is one of the leading orthopaedic surgery centers in the world, joined the UPMC Concussion Network. This past year, Drs. Collins and one of our fellows conducted workshops on our clinical profiles approach to concussion with SSC staff in Dublin. Several SSC staff also traveled to Pittsburgh in 2025 and 2026 for immersive, observational training on our model at our clinics. In addition, Drs. Kontos and Collins continued to grow our academic partnerships with Dublin City University and the University of Limerick (UL). In fact, a UL and UPMC Ireland partnership resulted in a joint PhD Studentship at UL to conduct concussion research in conjunction with the Irish Rugby Injury Surveillance program through 2028.

CONCUSSION CLINICAL RESEARCH OPPORTUNITIES

Overview – The mission of our clinical research is to “use research to inform a more effective clinical approach to assessing and treating concussion using targeted treatment and rehabilitation strategies based on evolving clinical profiles and comprehensive assessments.” In support of this mission, the Concussion Research Laboratory (CRL) is led by Research Director Dr. Anthony Kontos. Our clinical concussion research program has had over \$55 million in external funding from over 50 grants. We have published over 500 peer-reviewed papers and been cited more than 20,000 times. Our faculty average one peer-reviewed publication every 10 days and 4-5 citations in the literature per day.

Resources – The CRL is located close to the main clinic at UPMC Sports Medicine at the Rivertech offices in Pittsburgh's Southside neighborhood, and consists of 2800 square feet of dedicated research, meeting, laboratory testing, and office space. The CRL houses advanced testing equipment including a certified blood collection and processing room, a minus 80 freezer for biospecimen storage, exertion testing apparatus, a NASCAR driving simulator functional near-infrared spectroscopy (fNIRS) and EEG imaging equipment, a retinal eye tracking scanning laser ophthalmoscope, pupilometer, vestibulo-ocular goggles, and a portable force platform, as well as multiple computer testing stations with software for a comprehensive battery of neuropsychological, neuromotor, and psychological health assessments; MatLab; and other analytical tools. We also have strong collaborative relationships with the University of Pittsburgh's Magnetic Resonance Research Center (MRRC), which provides us with access to 3T and 7T MRI scanners for neuroimaging studies. The CRL includes the research director, Dr. Kontos, research assistant professor, Dr. Aaron Zynda, a lab coordinator, research project coordinators, research assistants, phlebotomists, master's and doctoral-level biostatisticians, as well as doctoral, resident, medical, and undergraduate student interns. The CRL and its staff support our research program's commitment to be at the leading edge of concussion clinical research by translating research into better clinical care for our patients.

Fellow Immersion in Clinical Research – Neuropsychology fellows are actively involved in grant-funded and faculty-led clinical research, and are encouraged and mentored to pursue their own research interests using existing data and prospectively collected data. Fellows are expected to spend their weekly “research day” at the CRL, where they have dedicated workspace and access to the CRL's staff, equipment, and software including statistical programs such as SPSS and MatLab, as well as Machine Learning/AI tools to support their research.

Access to Clinical Research Data – An exciting aspect of the CRL is the ongoing access to multiple large clinical trials, as well as an EHR clinical research database of over 8000 patients with concussion from our clinics throughout Pittsburgh and Ireland, which provide access to data for clinical research projects. These databases provide many opportunities to collaborate with our research partners at the University of Pittsburgh from the MRI Research Center, and Departments of Neurosurgery, Psychiatry, Psychology, and Physical Therapy, and the Eye and Ear Institute, as well as external national and international partners from academe, military, and sport organizations.

Strong Record of Research Funding and Publications – Our research has been funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of War/Defense (DoW/D), the National Football League (NFL), Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research, as well as foundations and corporate and individual sponsors. During the past year, we led 10 externally-funded research projects on concussion and brain health. On average, our faculty publish approximately 40 impactful and innovative peer-reviewed research articles each year in high-impact journals including *JAMA Open*, *Journal of Pediatrics*, *Sports Medicine*, *Archives of PMR*, and *Journal of Neurotrauma*. Below is a summary of select funded research projects fellows may be involved in.

Concussion Clinical Trials: Enhancing Clinical Care through Research

During the past couple of years we concluded enrolling over 120 military service members and civilians into our DoD/W-funded Targeted Rehabilitation Exercises for Vestibular (T-REV) RCT, and we are developing clinical guidelines for prescribing vestibular rehabilitation in military service members and civilians following

concussion. We have also concluded enrollment of over 160 patients into our DoD/W-funded Targeted Multidomain (T-MD) RCT, a multisite study with Inova Sports Medicine Concussion Program (Fairfax, VA) of the effectiveness of targeted treatments in military-aged civilians. We also recently concluded enrolling older adult patients into the first-ever RCT of concussion treatment in this at-risk population. We are currently conducting a DoW/D-funded clinical trial called the Acceptance and Commitment Therapy Integrated Vestibular Rehabilitation (ACTIVE) for mTBI: A Targeted, Randomized, Controlled.

Applying Cutting-Edge Clinical, Biological, and Neuroimaging Assessments to Concussion and Brain Health

During the past year our program led multiple projects involving state-of-the-art biological markers to inform concussion clinical assessment and treatments. We are currently enrolling patients into two studies examining the role of hypothalamic pituitary axis interleukin markers of neuroinflammation funded by the Department of Defense (DoD), including the newly funded *Microglial Breakthroughs in Longevity, Aging & Senescence after TBI (MicroBlast)* study. We also just concluded enrollment and are analyzing data involving a saliva neuroinflammatory biomarker in adolescents to identify persistent post-concussion symptoms (PPCS) that was funded by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. Drs. Collins and Kontos also serve as primary investigators for a ground-breaking National Football League-funded study of clinical and biological markers of long term brain health in former professional football players, referred to as the Brain Health Initiative (BHI). In August 2024 we expanded our BHI work and began enrolling military and civilian participants into a large, four-project DoD-funded program award, titled Brain Risk Assessment for Individual Neurological (BRAIN) Health: Understanding/Preventing Consequences from Repetitive mTBI and Repetitive Head Impact (RHI) Exposures, which will examine the intersection of mTBI and RHI in over 700 military service members and civilians. In addition, we received renewal funding for an NIH R01 longitudinal study titled Identifying Concussed Adolescents at Risk for Emotional Dysregulation-2 (iCARE-2) project, which uses advanced neuroimaging, biomarkers, and clinical assessments to identify at-risk adolescents following this injury. In addition, we are conducting several new studies focused on assessing anxiety/arousal in relation to exertion post-concussion, examining the clinical utility of point-of-care blood biomarkers tools for use in the concussion clinic, and conducting numerous device trials of the effectiveness of ocular, EEG, and fNIRS assessments following concussion. These studies provide rich databases for both biomarker and clinical outcomes, and are ideal for fellows to use in their own research projects.

Focusing on Concussion in Women and Girls



We are currently in the third year of a first of its kind, multi-year, multisite study of Women's Multidomain Evaluation of Neurobiological Health following Concussion (WOMEN's Health Concussion) funded by Chuck Noll Foundation

for Brain Injury Research and Magee Women's Research Institute. This study involves a comprehensive, prospective study comparing the effects of concussion to orthopaedic injury in 150 women and adolescent girls' menstrual cycle function, psychological health, and other health outcomes at both Pitt/ UPMC and Inova Sports Medicine Concussion Program.

Setting the Standard with Impactful Publications

Our clinical research team continues to lead the way in the field of sports-related concussion. In fact, Dr. Kontos and Dr. Collins were the #1 and #4 ranked researchers in the field of sports-related concussion (Tang et al., *World Neurosurg*; 2022). In the past five years, our faculty and trainees have published over 200 peer-reviewed papers and have been cited over 10,000 times. During this time, we averaged nearly 40 publications and 2000 citations. In 2025, our publications appeared in high impact journals including *Sports Medicine* (Impact Factor [IF]= 11.5), *JAMA Open* (IF= 11.7), and *Journal of Pediatrics* (IF= 4.0). Below are highlights from several impactful papers involving our faculty, and current or recent fellows as co-authors during the previous year.

Targeted Multidomain Treatment for Mild Traumatic Brain Injury: A Randomized Clinical Trial. (Kontos et al., [JAMA Netw Open](#); 2026)

Mild traumatic brain injuries (mTBI) involving anxiety and mood, cognitive, migraine and headache, ocular, vestibular, sleep, and autonomic domains can result in chronic symptoms and impairments, thereby increasing morbidity and decreasing quality of life for patients. Timely interventions targeting involved mTBI domains may improve symptoms and impairments and accelerate recovery. The objective of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of a targeted multidomain (T-MD) intervention for mTBI in adults. 162 adult patients were randomized to T-MD interventions tailored to each domain or a behavioral management control group (control). Findings indicated that the T-MD group experienced greater improvements in total, ocular, and vestibular symptom severity on the CP Screen; vestibular and ocular impairment on the VOMS; and cognitive processing speed on ImPACT. The findings can inform a more effective, efficient, and evidence-based approach to care for mTBI.

Effect of Dose of Targeted Rehabilitation Exercises for Vestibular Impairments Following Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (Sparto et al., Journal of Neurologic Physical Therapy; 2026)

Vestibular rehabilitation is an effective treatment for dizziness and balance problems following concussion, but little evidence exists regarding the optimal amount of exercise patients should perform. We conducted a randomized clinical trial examining whether different exercise intensities and frequencies influenced recovery in adults with vestibular impairments following mild traumatic brain injury. Participants completed home-based vestibular rehabilitation programs that varied in exercise intensity and frequency over four weeks. Regardless of the prescribed dose, patients experienced meaningful improvements in dizziness, balance, and other vestibular outcomes, while no single exercise prescription proved superior. These findings suggest that vestibular rehabilitation programs can be individualized based on a patient's symptoms, goals, and tolerance rather than adhering to a single standardized protocol, providing clinicians with greater flexibility when designing rehabilitation programs.

Connecting the Dots: Network Analysis of the Concussion Clinical Profiles Screening among Adolescents (Thomas et al., Journal of Pediatrics; 2026)

Concussion symptoms rarely occur in isolation; instead, they interact in complex ways across multiple clinical domains. Understanding how these symptoms relate to one another may improve the identification and treatment of specific concussion profiles. In this study, we applied advanced network analysis techniques to the Concussion Clinical Profiles Screening (CP Screen) in more than 900 adolescents evaluated shortly after concussion. The findings demonstrated that symptoms clustered according to the CP Screen's predefined clinical profiles and identified highly connected "bridge" symptoms that link multiple domains. These results provide strong empirical support for the CP Screen as a multidomain clinical assessment and offer new insight into how concussion symptoms interact. Better understanding these symptom networks may help clinicians identify key treatment targets and further personalize rehabilitation strategies following concussion.

For more information about the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Research Lab visit our website at: orthoresearch.pitt.edu/concussion-research-laboratory.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

All neuropsychology fellows are encouraged to participate in ongoing community outreach. UPMC Sports Medicine partners with over 60 area high schools and universities to offer both on-field and in-office management of sports injuries including concussion. As such, neuropsychology fellows are often asked to educate school professionals, coaches, student-athletes, and parent groups on concussion basics and the importance of proper post-injury management.

In addition to education, the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program is proud to partner with the Pittsburgh Penguins Foundation to offer the Heads UP Pittsburgh program. Heads UP Pittsburgh provides free neurocognitive baseline testing for athletes ages 7 to 14 in western Pennsylvania. Athletes 15 and older are offered baseline testing for a nominal fee as well. Neuropsychology fellows are welcome to learn more about and become involved with this program.

For a closer look at the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program's treatment approach, multidisciplinary team, research updates, and patient stories, please visit our website at UPMC.com/Concussion.

Follow us on X (formerly Twitter): @UPMC_Concussion.

FELLOWSHIP APPLICATION AND SELECTION PROCEDURES

The UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program seeks qualified applicants from doctoral training programs in psychology. Applicants to the two-year clinical neuropsychology specialty program are required to demonstrate academic and clinical experience in neuropsychology, conveyed through formal coursework, clinical experience, and letters of recommendation. The fellowship position offers an annual salary of \$62,000 with full medical benefits. Fellows are also provided with a travel budget of \$2500 per year.

Applicants must have completed all requirements for their doctoral degree, which includes the successful defense of their dissertation prior to starting the postdoctoral fellowship. In order for the program to make an offer to an applicant who has not yet completed their dissertation defense, a letter from the chair attesting that the dissertation will be completed prior to the start of the fellowship is required. In addition, candidates' doctoral program and internship must be accredited by the American Psychological Association or Canadian Psychological Association.

Postdoctoral fellows are selected on the basis of academic excellence, clinical experience, research experience, recommendations of professors and supervisors, interview, and interests. Given the work environment and primary population served, consideration is given to certain aspects of life experience, particularly experience with sports. There are currently three anticipated openings for 2027-2029. Application deadline is November 30, 2026. Applications are reviewed once complete. Interviews will be offered as completed applications are reviewed. There will be an on-site interview day in mid-December. Offers may be extended to qualified candidates prior to the application deadline.

APPLICATION PROCEDURE

All application materials are to be submitted by **November 30, 2026**. Interviews will be offered as completed applications are received. Materials should be emailed directly to Dr. Nathan Kegel at kegelne@upmc.edu.

The following materials are required:

1. Statement of goals and interests
2. CV
3. Three letters of recommendation (at least one from an internship supervisor). If submitting electronically, it is preferred that all three letters are scanned into one PDF document. If this is not possible, references may also email letters to the Fellowship Director at the email address below.

For application questions:

Dr. Nathan Kegel

kegelne@upmc.edu

LOCAL INFORMATION

The UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program is affiliated with the University of Pittsburgh. Founded in 1787, the University is one of the oldest higher education institutions in the United States and one of the most respected and productive research centers. Pitt's main campus is in Oakland, only five minutes from the UPMC Rooney Sports Complex, opening much of the city to affordable living options and plentiful cultural opportunities.

Pittsburgh is known both for its livability and affordability, consistently ranking among the most livable cities in the United States. The city boasts a number of museums, including the Carnegie Museums of Art, Natural History, and Science; the Andy Warhol Museum; the

Mattress Factory Art Museum; Phipps Conservatory and Botanical Gardens; Senator John Heinz Pittsburgh Regional History Center; and the Soldiers and Sailors Memorial Hall and Museum. Pittsburgh's theater district is a short bus ride away and includes a number of active theaters with top acts in musical theater. In addition, Pittsburgh is home to a vibrant sports scene, including professional football, baseball, and hockey teams, as well as a full range of collegiate athletics through Pitt and other local universities. Please visit the following links for more information regarding moving to Pittsburgh and exploring the city:

coolpgh.pitt.edu

visitpittsburgh.com

UPMC SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM FACULTY



Michael "Micky" Collins, PhD
Executive and Clinical Director

*Professor and Arthur J. Rooney, Sr.
Chair in Sports Medicine*

Michael "Micky" Collins, PhD, is an internationally renowned expert in sports-related concussion. A leading clinician and researcher, Dr. Collins serves as director and a founding

member of the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program. Established in 2000, it was the first program of its kind; more than a decade later, it remains the largest research and clinical program focused on the assessment, treatment, rehabilitation, research, and education of sports-related mild traumatic brain injury in athletes of all levels. Dr. Collins' expertise attracts elite and professional athletes from around the world seeking the comprehensive care he provides and the multidisciplinary approach he helped to introduce. The program has roughly 20,000 patient visits annually at seven different locations across Pittsburgh. Dr. Collins and his UPMC program colleagues attract patients embodying youth, high school, collegiate, and pro athletes with concerns about safe return to play and clinical management and treatment of sports concussion.

Besides his extensive clinical experience, Dr. Collins also has been a lead author and investigator on numerous groundbreaking studies of high school and college athletes published in *JAMA*, *Neurosurgery*, *American Journal of Sports Medicine*, and *Pediatrics*, among many others. He has been the lead author or co-author on over 200 peer-reviewed research articles and has delivered more than 550 presentations at national and international scientific meetings. Dr. Collins currently has upward of \$19 million in funding for his research efforts from entities including the NFL-GE Head Health Challenge, National Institute of Health, Major League Baseball, and the United States Army Special Operations Command. National and local media frequently interview him as an expert source.

Dr. Collins has been an instrumental source across the nation in developing concussion-management policy in youth sports, state legislation on youth safety, the Centers for Disease Control's concussion toolkit, and pioneering targeted treatment pathways for his patients. He is a co-founder of ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment

and Cognitive Testing), the most widely used computerized sports-concussion evaluation system that has become a standard of care in nearly all organized sports at all levels. As a result, he is a leader in educating and implementing the proper usage of such baseline and post-injury neurocognitive testing as one tool to help determine an injury's severity and recovery for safe return to play. More recently, Dr. Collins was the Meeting Chairman for the Targeted Evaluation and Active Management (TEAM) Approach to Treating Concussion. This meeting was held in Pittsburgh in October 2015 and was the first focused meeting regarding treatment of sports-related concussion. Underwritten by the NFL, this meeting resulted in the first published white paper on treatment of concussion, published in *Neurosurgery*.

In addition to training thousands of physicians and certified athletic trainers in the diagnosis, management, and treatment of sports-related concussion, he advises and is a consultant to numerous athletic organizations and teams, including the NFL Steelers, the NHL Penguins, other NFL teams, numerous MLB clubs, several NCAA programs, USA Rugby and many international sports affiliations. He serves as an Associate Editor of the *Journal of Neurosurgery* and the *Journal of Sports Neurology*. Dr. Collins is also on the editorial board of such publications as *Brain Injury Professional* and the *Journal of Athletic Training*.

A graduate of the University of Southern Maine with a bachelor's degree in psychology and biology in 1991, Dr. Collins earned a master's degree in psychology in 1995 and a doctorate degree in clinical psychology in 1998 at Michigan State University.

Among numerous national and international honors over the past decade, in 2022, Dr. Collins earned the title of Professor and the Arthur J Rooney, Sr. Chair in Sports Medicine. He has also been named an Irish America Healthcare and Life Sciences Top 50 Honoree. In 2010, he received the National Council on Brain Injury annual award for outstanding research and advocacy. In 2009, he was awarded the Kenneth L. Knight Award for outstanding research. In 2007, the National Academy of Neuropsychology honored him with the Annual Butters Award. An athlete himself, Dr. Collins played in the 1989 NCAA Baseball College World Series for the University of Southern Maine.

UPMC SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM FACULTY (CONT'D)



Anthony Kontos, PhD
Research Director

Dr. Kontos is Professor and Vice-Chair of Clinical Research in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh, and Research Director of the Concussion Research Laboratory and UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program. He received his doctoral degree in kinesiology/sport psychology from

Michigan State University where he received master's degrees in counseling psychology and exercise science and completed an internship in counseling psychology. He completed his B.A. in psychology and business administration at Adrian College (Adrian, MI), where he was a four-year starter on the men's soccer team.

Dr. Kontos has specialized in concussion research for over 20 years with nearly 315+ peer-reviewed publications. He has received approximately over \$50 million in research funding for over 40 grants focused on concussion, brain health, and related areas of research. Dr. Kontos has been the principal investigator for grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Institutes of Health (NIH), Department of War/Defense (Do W/D), U.S. Special Operations Command, National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA), National Football League (NFL), Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research, and National Operating Committee of Standards for Athletic Equipment. His research focuses on active treatments and clinical trials; risk factors; neurocognitive/neuromotor assessments and effects; psychological issues; and concussion and brain health in military, pediatric, and sport populations.

Dr. Kontos is an Editorial Board Member of the *Journal of Neurotrauma*, and a frequent reviewer for journals including the *New England Journal of Medicine*, *Journal of the American Medical Association*, and *American Journal of Sports Medicine and Pediatrics*. He is also an invited reviewer of grants for the NIH and DoW. He is currently a standing member of the NIH Brain Injury and Neurovascular Disorders study section. He served as chair on the sub-acute working group of the NIH Sports Concussion Common Data Elements statement and paper and was a member and co-author of the 2019 American Medical Society for Sports Medicine's (AMSSM) position statement on concussion in sport.

Prior to coming to UPitt/UPMC, Dr. Kontos was a professor and chair-elect at California State Polytechnic University, Humboldt (formerly known as California State University – Humboldt) and director of the North Coast Sports Concussion Program in northern California, and an associate professor with tenure and associate chair of the IRB at the University of New Orleans, where he directed its sport concussion testing program. While in New Orleans, Dr. Kontos also was an Adjunct Professor in the Sports Medicine Fellowship at Louisiana State University Health Sciences Center.

Dr. Kontos is a frequent invited international and national lecturer on concussion and brain health, with over 540 presentations at scientific meetings. He has also received numerous honors for his work in the field including the 2023 Society for Sport, Exercise, & Performance Psychology (American Psychological Association) Distinguished Scientific and Research Contributions to Sport, Exercise, and Performance Psychology Award and the 2022 Michigan State University Department of Kinesiology Professional Achievement

Award. Dr. Kontos is fellow of the Society for Sport, Exercise, & Performance Psychology of the American College of Sports Medicine, American Psychological Association, National Academy of Kinesiology, American College of Sports Medicine, Association for Applied Sport Psychology, and Eastern Psychological Association. He is also co-author of *Concussion: A Clinical Profile Based Approach to Assessment and Treatment*. A longtime, but now retired competitive soccer player, Dr. Kontos enjoys fly fishing, stand up paddling, surfing, skiing, hiking, tennis, cooking, and playing/listening to music.



Nathan Kegel, PhD
Fellowship Director

Dr. Kegel is a clinical neuropsychologist with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh. He earned a bachelor's degree in psychology from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree in child psychology from

Duquesne University. He completed an APA-accredited doctoral program in school psychology at Duquesne University, as well as an APA-accredited internship in pediatric neuropsychology at The Watson Institute in Sewickley, Pa. Dr. Kegel has been a part of the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program since 2009, first completing a two-year fellowship program in sports neuropsychology. He was hired as full-time clinical faculty in 2011.

Dr. Kegel has been fellowship director for the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program since 2017. He is responsible for nationwide recruitment of post-doctoral fellowship candidates, and development of training material for current fellows. He has taught several semester-long child neuropsychology classes as an adjunct professor at Duquesne University, and frequently conducts lectures and workshops related to sports concussion on a local and national level. Dr. Kegel's current research interests center around assessment and management of pediatric concussion.



Alicia Trbovich, PhD, ABPP
Fellowship Research Coordinator

Dr. Trbovich is a board-certified clinical neuropsychologist with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and Associate Professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. She completed her undergraduate degree at Marquette University, with concentrations in psychology and biological

sciences. She then earned a doctorate in clinical health psychology with an emphasis in neuropsychology at East Carolina University. Dr. Trbovich completed her predoctoral internship in neuropsychology at the University of Florida/Shands Hospital and a two-year postdoctoral fellowship with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program. She has been part of the UPMC Concussion Program faculty since 2015. She sees a broad range of patients, ages 5+, with a primary interest in sport-related concussion. She serves as the Fellowship Research Coordinator and has published over 75 peer reviewed articles in concussion evaluation and management. She has lectured across the country and internationally on topics related to concussion, with a primary interest in progressing and improving clinical care through evidence-based treatment.

UPMC SPORTS MEDICINE CONCUSSION PROGRAM FACULTY (CONT'D)



Chris Burley, PhD

Dr. Burley is a clinical neuropsychologist with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh. He completed his undergraduate degree in psychology at Villanova University where he was a walk-on wide receiver for the Wildcats football team. He then earned a

doctorate in clinical psychology with a neuropsychology major area of study at Nova Southeastern University in 2022. Dr. Burley completed his predoctoral internship in neuropsychology at the Memphis VA Medical Center in collaboration with St. Jude Children's Research Hospital and Semmes-Murphey Clinic. He was hired as a clinical faculty member in September 2024 after completing a two-year postdoctoral fellowship with the UPMC Concussion Program. Dr. Burley is trained in lifespan neuropsychology, and he sees a broad range of patients, with a primary interest in sports-related concussion. He has published multiple peer-reviewed articles related to concussion and has lectured at various national conferences. Dr. Burley's clinical and research interests include active treatments for concussion, psychological issues in concussion recovery, and long-term brain health.



Vanessa Fazio-Sumrok, PhD

Dr. Fazio-Sumrok is a clinical neuropsychologist with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. Dr. Fazio-Sumrok earned her undergraduate degree in psychology at Ithaca College and doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Suffolk University, with a concentration in

neuropsychology. She completed an APA-accredited clinical internship in neuropsychology at Allegheny General Hospital in Pittsburgh. Dr. Fazio-Sumrok joined the faculty in 2008 after completing a two-year post-doctoral fellowship with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program. Dr. Fazio-Sumrok sees patients across the lifespan, but her primary interest is pediatric and adolescent concussion. She has multiple peer reviewed articles and posters accepted at national conferences. Dr. Fazio-Sumrok's research interests include assessment of pediatric concussion, active treatment protocols, and emotional functioning following concussion.



Jonathan French, PsyD

Dr. French is a clinical neuropsychologist with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and assistant professor in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery. He graduated from Widener University in 2010 with his doctorate in clinical psychology and concentrations in forensics and neuropsychology. He completed his internship in the neuropsychology division of Delaware Youth and Family Services.

Dr. French focused his research at Widener on traumatic brain injury, as well as the evaluation of malingering in neuropsychological testing. His dissertation examined personality characteristics of individuals engaging in malingering during neuropsychology assessment. Upon completion of his doctorate, Dr. French completed a post-doctoral fellowship at the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program. His current clinical interests include working with school districts in the area to provide the proper accommodations to individuals who have suffered a concussion.



Aaron J. Zynda, PhD, CCRP

Dr. Zynda is a Research Assistant Professor with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and the Concussion Research Laboratory in the Department of Orthopaedic Surgery at the University of Pittsburgh. He completed his Bachelor of Science in Movement Science from the University of Michigan in 2015.

Following his undergraduate degree, he worked as a clinical research coordinator for the Scottish

Rite for Children Orthopedic and Sports Medicine Center, where he obtained certification as a Certified Clinical Research Professional (CCRP) in 2018. He then received his Doctoral degree in Kinesiology from Michigan State University in 2023, with concentrations in cognitive motor neuroscience, sports psychology, and neuroepidemiology.

Dr. Zynda was hired as a faculty member in July 2025, following a two-year postdoctoral research fellowship with the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program and the Concussion Research Laboratory. His research interests include using clinical profiles to inform multidomain assessment of concussion and targeted, active interventions and rehabilitation programs to improve brain health outcomes and mitigate long-term morbidity. Dr. Zynda is the first or contributing author on 65+ peer-reviewed publications, and his work has been featured in reputable journals, including *JAMA Network Open*, *Sports Medicine*, *the American Journal of Sports Medicine*, and *the Journal of Pediatrics*. He is an avid lecturer, with over 150 professional presentations nationally and internationally on topics related to concussion and clinical research. Dr. Zynda has received funding for his research from the Chuck Noll Foundation for Brain Injury Research, the Pittsburgh Foundation, the American College of Sports Medicine, the Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan, and Michigan State University College of Education. He has also received several honors for his work, including the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH) Clinical Research Loan Repayment Award in 2026, the University of Pittsburgh Postdoctoral Research Symposium Award in 2025, the Sports Neuropsychology Society (SNS) Outstanding Trainee Award in 2024, and the American Kinesiology Association (AKA) National Doctoral Scholar Award in 2023.

CURRENT FELLOWS

Brittany Rohl, PhD

Dr. Rohl joined the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program in August 2025. She earned her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from the University of Florida, with an emphasis on Neuropsychology, Neurorehabilitation, and Clinical Neuroscience. She completed an APA-accredited internship at Northwell Health Staten Island University Hospital. She earned a Bachelor of Science degree in psychology from Fordham University and a Master of Science degree in psychology from the University of Florida. Her clinical and research interests center on the interplay between psychological and behavioral factors during recovery from concussion. Outside of work, she enjoys being outside with her dogs, listening to music, and making art.

Garrett Thomas, PhD

Dr. Thomas joined the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program in August 2025 and is the current NASCAR fellow. He earned his doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Penn State University, with an emphasis on clinical neuropsychology. Dr. Thomas completed an APA-accredited internship in neuropsychology at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine. He earned his bachelor's degree in neuroscience from Bowdoin College, where he was a member of the football and track & field teams. Dr. Thomas's clinical and research interests include understanding how factors such as depression, anxiety, and sleep affect risk and recovery from concussion in addition to long-term health outcomes. He is also interested in personalized medicine, and his dissertation focused on using machine learning to predict recovery timelines following sports-related concussion based on individualized factors. Dr. Thomas enjoys playing and watching sports, trying out new restaurants, and spending time with family.

Emily Helene Fannick, Psy.D.

Dr. Fannick joined the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program in August 2026. She earned her doctoral and master's degrees in clinical psychology from the Philadelphia College of Osteopathic Medicine. She also holds a master's degree in experimental psychology and a bachelor's degree in psychology, with a minor in behavioral neuroscience, from Saint Joseph's University, where she played on the women's club basketball team. Dr. Fannick completed an APA-accredited internship in neuropsychology at the VA Tennessee Valley Healthcare System, followed by a 2-year postdoctoral fellowship in neuropsychology at the Salisbury VA Health Care System's Mental Illness Research, Education, and Clinical Center (MIRECC) in North Carolina. Dr. Fannick's clinical and research interests focus on the factors that contribute to treatment outcomes following concussion, such as comorbid conditions, distress tolerance, and resilience, through an interdisciplinary care model. She is also interested in working with caregiver, active military personnel, and Veteran populations. A Northeastern Pa. native, she is a sports fan who enjoys staying active, listening to music, and spending time with family.

Kayley Slicer, PsyD

Dr. Slicer joined the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program in July 2026. She earned her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Nova Southeastern University, with an emphasis on clinical neuropsychology. Dr. Slicer completed an APA-accredited internship working with children, adolescents, and families at Clarity Child Guidance Center in San Antonio, Texas. Previously, she earned her master's degree in experimental psychology from St. Joseph's University under the mentorship of Dr. Phillip Schatz. Dr. Slicer earned her bachelor's degree in psychology from Drexel University, where she was a member of the women's rowing team. Her master's thesis evaluated the use of effort measures in the assessment of sport-related concussion and neuropsychological test outcomes. Her clinical and research interests include understanding best methods and practices for assessing concussions and factors affecting concussion symptomatology. Dr. Slicer enjoys finding the best food in the city, watching Philadelphia team sports, and capturing sunsets.

Claire Stafford-Weber, PhD

Dr. Stafford-Weber joined the UPMC Sports Medicine Concussion Program in July 2026. She earned her doctoral degree in clinical psychology from Nova Southeastern University, with an emphasis on clinical neuropsychology. She completed an APA-accredited internship at Vanderbilt University Medical Center. She earned her bachelor's degree in psychology, with an emphasis in neuroscience, and global and community mental health from Macalester College, where she was a member of the soccer and track & field teams. Her clinical and research interests center on sports neuropsychology and the neurocognitive sequelae of concussion and traumatic brain injury. She is interested in identifying biopsychosocial factors that contribute to variability in recovery trajectories, including preexisting neurodevelopmental conditions, psychological functioning, and demographic influences. She is also interested in medical literacy and developing accessible, evidence-based educational resources to improve patients' and families' understanding of neurological conditions, assessment findings, and treatment recommendations. Her dissertation examined differences in cerebral blood flow between children and adults with ADHD using single photon emission computed tomography (SPECT). Dr. Stafford-Weber enjoys hiking and reading.

MEDICAL DIRECTOR

Joseph C. Maroon, MD



Dr. Maroon is clinical professor of neurological surgery and the Heindl Scholar in Neuroscience at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine. He received his medical and neurosurgical training at Indiana University, Georgetown University, Oxford University in England, and the University of Vermont. He is board-certified in neurological surgery.

Dr. Maroon's clinical and research interests are in the development of minimally invasive surgical procedures for the brain and spine; the prevention and treatment of traumatic injuries to the central nervous system; innovative approaches to pituitary and brain tumors; and complementary approaches to inflammatory diseases of aging. Dr. Maroon has acted as the team neurosurgeon, specializing in diseases related to aging for the Pittsburgh Steelers for more than 25 years.

UPMC is an equal opportunity employer. UPMC policy prohibits discrimination or harassment on the basis of race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, age, sex, genetics, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, marital status, familial status, disability, veteran status, or any other legally protected group status. Further, UPMC will continue to support and promote equal employment opportunity, human dignity, and racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. This policy applies to admissions, employment, and access to and treatment in UPMC programs and activities. This commitment is made by UPMC in accordance with federal, state, and/or local laws and regulations.

26CON222050 SR/GD 09/26 © 2026 UPMC