

High-intensity interval training improves the reactive strength index and motor ability of youth football players

Submission date	Recruitment status	<input type="checkbox"/> Prospectively registered
15/07/2025	No longer recruiting	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Protocol
Registration date	Overall study status	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Statistical analysis plan
16/07/2025	Completed	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Results
Last Edited	Condition category	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual participant data
02/02/2026	Other	

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims

This study looks at how a type of exercise called high-intensity interval training (HIIT) might help young football players improve their physical abilities. Researchers wanted to see if HIIT could make them faster, stronger, more agile, and better at jumping.

Who can participate?

The study involved 20 healthy boys aged 11 to 13 who were already training at a local football academy.

What does the study involve?

The boys were split into two groups. One group did extra HIIT workouts for four weeks, along with their regular football training. The other group just continued with their usual training. The HIIT sessions included short sprints and jumping exercises, done three times a week. Before and after the training, all participants took part in physical tests to measure things like speed, agility, strength, and jumping ability.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?

The main benefit is that the training might help improve athletic performance, especially in speed and explosive power. The risks were very small and mostly related to normal muscle soreness or feeling tired. All sessions were supervised to make sure the boys stayed safe.

Where is the study run from?

The study was carried out on a football field in Tatvan, Bitlis, Turkey.

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?

Recruitment for the study began on 1 February 2025 and ended on 10 February 2025. The training program ran from 15 February to 15 March 2025.

Who is funding the study?

Investigator initiated and funded

Who is the main contact?
Dr Serkan Kızılca, skizilca@beu.edu.tr

Contact information

Type(s)

Public, Scientific, Principal investigator

Contact name

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Additional identifiers

Clinical Trials Information System (CTIS)

Nil known

ClinicalTrials.gov (NCT)

Nil known

Protocol serial number

Nil known

Study information

Scientific Title

The effects of high-intensity training on jumping and movement skills in youth football players

Acronym

HIIT-RSI-Football-Youth

Study objectives

The aim of this study was to determine the effects of a four-week high-intensity interval training (HIIT) intervention on reactive strength index (RSI) and motor skills in youth football players. In this context, the contributions of the HIIT protocol, implemented in addition to regular football training, to motor performance indicators such as speed, agility, jump performance, and back strength were evaluated. This study aims to contribute to the development of scientifically based training programs to support performance improvement in young athletes.

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval required

Ethics approval(s)

approved 02/01/2025, Non-Invasive Clinical Research Ethics Committee of Bitlis Eren University (Bitlis, Bitlis, 13000, Türkiye; +90 4342220000; beugokaek@beu.edu.tr), ref: Decision No: 13, Protocol No: 2024/9

Study design

Interventional randomized controlled trial

Primary study design

Interventional

Study type(s)

Efficacy

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied

Neuromuscular performance, reactive strength, and motor abilities related to physical fitness and athletic development in adolescent football players.

Interventions

The experimental group underwent a 4-week high-intensity interval training (HIIT) program in addition to their regular football training. Training sessions were conducted three times per week (Monday, Wednesday, and Friday) on a natural grass field. Each session consisted of 2 sets of 6 sprint-based repetitions lasting 15 seconds each, with 30 seconds of passive rest between repetitions and 3 minutes of rest between sets. The training intensity was progressively increased from 80% to 90% throughout the intervention. A standardized 15-minute warm-up protocol was performed before each session. Target heart rate zones were monitored using the Karvonen formula. The control group continued with their routine football training without any additional intervention.

To evaluate the effects of the intervention, the following physical performance tests were conducted before and after the training period:

10 m, 20 m, and 30 m sprint tests

Back strength test (using a dynamometer)

Illinois agility test

Countermovement jump (CMJ) test

Reactive strength index (RSI) assessment

All tests were conducted on a natural grass field using standardized warm-up and recovery procedures.

Participants were randomly assigned to either the experimental or control group using a computer-generated sequence created in Microsoft Excel. The allocation sequence was generated by an independent researcher who was not involved in participant recruitment or assessment. Group assignments were concealed in sequentially numbered, opaque, sealed envelopes to maintain allocation concealment.

Intervention Type

Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)

Reactive Strength Index (RSI), measured using the Smart Jump system, assessed pre- and post-intervention

Key secondary outcome(s)

Assessed pre- and post-intervention:

1. Sprint Performance: 10 m, 20 m, and 30 m sprint times measured using electronic timing gates to assess linear speed.
2. Back Strength: Assessed using a Takei dynamometer to evaluate maximal isometric strength.
3. Illinois Agility Test: Used to assess agility and change of direction ability on a standardized slalom course.
4. Countermovement Jump (CMJ): Vertical jump height measured using the Smart Jump system to assess explosive leg power.
5. Anthropometric Measurements: Body height and body weight measured to monitor physical characteristics of participants.

Completion date

15/03/2025

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria

1. Aged 13 years or younger
2. Actively playing football (registered at a football academy)
3. Participated in regular football training within the past 6 months
4. Physically healthy (no chronic illness or injury)
5. Willing to voluntarily participate in the study
6. Signed informed assent form
7. Written parental/legal guardian consent obtained

Participant type(s)

Healthy volunteer

Healthy volunteers allowed

No

Age group

Child

Lower age limit

11 years

Upper age limit

13 years

Sex

Male

Total final enrolment

20

Key exclusion criteria

1. Presence of any chronic disease
2. Orthopedic disorders or musculoskeletal injuries
3. Recent or ongoing infections
4. Requirement for continuous medication use
5. Lack of informed assent or parental/legal guardian consent
6. Voluntary withdrawal from the study at any stage
7. Failure to regularly attend training sessions or test procedures

Date of first enrolment

01/02/2025

Date of final enrolment

10/02/2025

Locations

Countries of recruitment

Türkiye

Study participating centre

Tatvan Fairground Football Field

Fairground Area, next to Tatvan Municipality

Bitlis

Türkiye

13200

Sponsor information

Organisation

Bitlis Eren University

ROR

<https://ror.org/00mm4ys28>

Funder(s)

Funder type

Other

Funder Name

Investigator initiated and funded

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan

IPD sharing plan summary

Not expected to be made available

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Results article		02/02/2026	02/02/2026	Yes	No
Participant information sheet			16/07/2025	No	Yes
Protocol file			16/07/2025	No	No
Statistical Analysis Plan			16/07/2025	No	No