

My name is Matt Hasselbeck, and I am here to share my insights on the significant role Sports Medicine has played throughout my athletic career and its ongoing influence in my life.

I played quarterback for 5 years at Boston College followed by a lengthy NFL career. The NFL, if you don't know, is commonly referred to by players and coaches as "Not For Long". But, with the help of great sports medicine teams I was fortunate to play for 18 years with the Green Bay Packers, Seattle Seahawks, Tennessee Titans, and Indianapolis Colts. I grew up as the son of a football player. After an All-American career at the University of Colorado, my dad played tight end in the NFL for 9 seasons. He played primarily with the New England Patriots, but also with the Minnesota Vikings, the New York Giants, and the Los Angeles Raiders, where he and his teammates won Super Bowl XVIII. My brothers and I all earned full scholarships to play college football, and my brother Tim followed me as a longtime quarterback in the NFL. Most of our wives were prominent Division 1 athletes as well, and my wife was no doubt a better athlete in college than I was.

In the decade since my NFL career ended, I have primarily worked in the sports media space. After spending 8 years at ESPN on shows like Sunday NFL Countdown, Monday Night Countdown, and SportsCenter, I now work as an NFL analyst for Fox Sports on the Colin Cowherd Show. I've also been serving as a high school football coach the past 4 years. After winning a state championship in Massachusetts coaching my son, last year we moved to Tennessee so I could coach on a staff with my father and brother, where we coached two of my quarterback nephews Taylor and Isaiah. Taylor is currently committed to play college football at the University of Wyoming.

Raising our own three kids and supporting their athletic journeys has been the other major career for my wife and me. Our two daughters are National Champion lacrosse players from Boston College; the younger one is preparing for a fifth year after three knee surgeries earned her a medical redshirt. Our son is a redshirt freshman quarterback at UCLA and is battling for his own opportunity much like I did at his age.

During my 23 years of college and professional football, I only had one surgery. This is unheard of! I attribute this to many factors, one of which is the help of skilled athletic trainers and sports medicine teams. Many of my teammates took a "react and survive" approach to their health, while a "proactive and thrive" approach is a mindset that helped me. I attribute this mindset to the advice, care, and expertise of the athletic training staffs of my teams. Not only did they help me prevent injuries, but they also contributed to helping me heal faster and return to play. Staying healthy is priority #1 for an NFL quarterback. Injury prevention, recovery, and prioritizing wellness were equally important to me as throwing touchdown passes. My coaches would often tell us, "Your greatest ability is your availability".

Both during and after my NFL career, I have been dedicated to making the game safer for future generations. I actively participated in the NFLPA's Mackey-White Health and Safety Committee and proudly served as a Vice-President of the NFLPA's Executive Committee for six years. Our work successfully fostered a significant culture change regarding brain injuries and return-to-play protocols in football. In commitment to this cause, upon my death I have pledged my brain to science through the Concussion Legacy Foundation. I currently serve as the ambassador for

the DiagnoseCTE.org study for men over 50 which aims to develop a method to diagnose and differentiate brain trauma while patients are still alive.

In this new empty nester era of our lives, my wife and I have experienced the challenges of caring for our aging grandparents and parents. We have leaned on the lessons learned through athletics to help replicate the best outcomes for them as they get older. For example, helping my mom set goals for the activities hopes to participate in with her grandkids when she is older means that we have to start prepping for that now, much like you would do as an athlete. My mom would love to be able to play pickleball and ride bikes with her grandkids when she is 75.

Sometimes it's not as simple. Following a painful knee replacement surgery, my dad was waiting to get healthy enough for the next one, when he tragically suffered a cardiac event this April, which he did not survive. This heartbreaking event has left my mom a widow after 50 years of marriage and she now faces new challenges, some of which are loneliness and isolation, that she must overcome. Sadly, as a family, we are also dealing with the significant challenge of my mother-in-law's Alzheimer's disease. This illness has placed immense hardship on our family, particularly affecting my father-in-law who sacrificed his profession to become her full-time caretaker.

In conclusion, that's a glimpse into who I am, and I'm truly honored to be here today. The last time I visited this building was during my 8th-grade class trip, and I had a wonderful time. I always hoped I'd get to come back again. I look forward to answering your questions.