

June 22, 2026

Adam Silver
Commissioner
National Basketball Association
645 Fifth Avenue
New York, NY 10022

Dear Commissioner Silver:

What is causing the huge rise of injuries in NBA? It's the shoes. **See baresole.com**

Recently completed, this comprehensive injury analysis is based on actual NBA game video. It presents compelling evidence, including video links, that modern basketball shoes have surprisingly become much less stable. As a result, injuries in the NBA today are much more frequent, much more serious, and much more recurrent than in the past.

As background, I developed the sole-based footwear technologies used in Adidas Feet You Wear and Nike Free athletic footwear. Today, I am the leading researcher on the biomechanical connection between shoe sole structural instability and sports injuries, particularly Achilles tendon ruptures and ankle sprains. My independent analysis identifies both the specific modern structural "improvements" that caused the increased footwear instability and the simple sole design corrections required now to undo them.

The analysis should therefore be included in the Commissioner's investigation of the unexplained surge in Achilles tendon ruptures in the NBA. It should also be referred to the NBA director of sports medicine, Dr. John DiFiori, for the NBA's ongoing investigation on the major increase in NBA ankle sprains.

Of particular importance, I believe that my comprehensive injury analysis indicates unequivocally that the least risky option available currently for NBA players is to wear the much more stable classic basketball shoes of the 1980's and earlier, which are still readily available. So it would be prudent for the NBA to simply inform its member teams of my injury analysis indicating the risk of avoidable injury associated with the continuing use of modern basketball shoes in NBA training, practice, and games; and for team staff to inform NBA players and their support groups of the injury analysis, in order for those players to be able to make informed decisions relative to risk of avoidable injury in their choice of shoes to wear when they prepare for and play NBA basketball. My analysis includes recommendations for specific classic 1980's and earlier basketball shoes that are available and have sole structures I believe are less risky.

Of course, the NBA is also fully justified in referring its injury problem to the athletic footwear industry, since it alone can restore shoe sole stability. My injury analysis identifies several uncomplicated but critical structural corrections to modern basketball shoe soles that simply undo the industry-wide modern "improvements" that created their increased instability. Those corrections could be quickly and easily implemented by the shoe industry.

The NBA and its players can play a critically important role with the footwear industry in facilitating the evaluation and testing of redesigned modern basketball shoes with these simple design corrections, which rely exclusively on inexpensive and non-proprietary technologies. Doing so clearly serves the best interests of the NBA and its players, as well as the shoe companies. All stand to profit enormously from shoes with much better stability, as will the general public.

In addition, **during related scientific research I was shocked to discover that human ankles when barefoot are naturally stable in the rolled out classic lateral ankle spraining position**. **This natural barefoot stability is absolutely unique, and was previously unknown.**

In shocking contrast, completely different, **the ankles of feet in basketball shoes are inherently unstable**. When the shoe is tilted out in the **classic lateral ankle spraining position**, the sole of those shoes acts as an unnatural lever that creates a powerful artificial torque that forces the human ankle to automatically roll over into a painful ankle sprain.

Based on the surprising discovery of the unique natural stability of barefeet, I designed an entirely different basketball shoe, **an experimental prototype based on the sole structure of the barefoot**. A limited factory production of **BARESOLE® basketball shoe prototypes** (in US sizes 6-18M) are available now to the NBA for experimental evaluation and testing in its **Launchpad program**. Testing already indicates the prototypes have barefoot-like stability. They are built with open technologies that are free to use by others for continued development.

Increased comfort is an unplanned benefit of the BARESOLE® structure of the prototypes. That unique comfort is especially obvious in another **experimental prototype**, the simple **BARESOLE® performance slides.** They are also available for NBA evaluation and testing in its **Launchpad program** for injury prevention and recovery.

These two experimental prototypes are intended as an important first step taken as a public service to jumpstart an ongoing development process for future basketball shoes, recovery slides, and other footwear based on a new open design standard for naturally stable footwear soles. Any profits from BARESOLE® sales will go to support research and development. The goal of the new design standard is to add true barefoot stability and comfort to the existing traction, cushioning, and protection already provided by footwear.

Sincerely,

Frampton Ellis