

# Family of ex- NFL player sues league for deadly brain damage

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Athletes might be some of the fittest people in the world, but even they cannot stand up to some forms of rough play. And when rough play is a given aspect of sports such as football and hockey, it should be no surprise that players are finding themselves dealing with the long-term effects of the rough play they took part in during their athletic careers.

NFL and NHL players sustain blows to the head often in their work, and not even helmets can protect them from concussions and the lasting impact that repeated [brain injury](#) can have on a person's health. Many ex-players are responding to that sad reality with personal injury lawsuits, and now the family of one ex-NFL player who died is suing the league for wrongful death related to brain damage.

Wally Hilgenberg played in various Super Bowls during his athletic career. He died in 2008, and health professionals reportedly found that the ultimate cause of death was Chronic Traumatic Encephalomyopathy (CTE). CTE is a studied effect of repeated concussions, along with memory loss and other more serious forms of dementia (from which Hilgenberg also suffered.)

His surviving family is suing because they believe that the NFL knew of the serious dangers of concussions but ignored research, failing to protect the health and future well-being of the players who made the games possible. This family is not alone in this argument, and it will be captivating to see how these personal injury lawsuits unfold and their effect on sports in the future.

## Source

Courthouse News Service: "[Vet's Family Sues NFL for Wrongful Death](#)," Philip A. Janquart, Feb. 13, 2012