



The linear impactor was originally designed to simulate head-to-head collision between two NFL football players as a means of evaluating helmet effectiveness. While helmet tests are traditionally done using drop towers, the extreme closing speeds of player-to-player hits makes a drop test not feasible. The helmet being evaluated is positioned on the test headform, typically a Hybrid III automotive head and neck, instrumented to record linear and angular head acceleration as well as upper neck forces and torques. The machine is charged with a pre-determined set pressure to achieve a desired speed and the impact ram is propelled into the helmeted headform. The advantage of this system is that the headform is free to deflect and rebound in a natural way to study complete head kinematics.



This system has been demonstrated to be both repeatable and reliable and is adaptable to other situations where bodily impacts are desired in the 5-13 m/s range.

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