Titans show their inner strength

Rugby league talent from the Jetstar Gold Coast Titans have been putting their bodies on the line for science.

The rugby players have been having their bone, muscle and fat mass analysed using high-tech equipment in the Bone Densitometry Research Laboratory.

The research, supervised by Dr Belinda Beck is looking at the relationship between body composition and injuries in professional players.

“Muscle to bone ratio for example is important because if muscles are not adequately splinting the bones then athletes may be more susceptible to injury.”

Dr Beck said there is some debate about whether elite level players are genetically advantaged with a naturally big build, strong bones and strong muscles.

“An alternative theory is that these players have developed big muscles through training and the mechanical load on the bone in turn develops stronger bones.”

The research will also provide practical information to the Titans’ team coaches and physiotherapists.

“For example, if we detect a relationship between extreme low body fat and injuries such as contusions, then it’s possible that increasing energy intake of very lean players during the season is an option.”

“Or if we find someone has constant shin splints, then there may be a need for specific pre-season training to prevent the injury occurring in the first place,” Dr Beck said.

The athletes are being tested pre-season, mid-season, and at the end of the season.

Ends