



Concussion and Traumatic Head Injury Information Sheet

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump or blow to the head or a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth
- Can change the way your brain normally functions
- Can occur in any sporting event
- Can happen even if you have not been knocked out
- Can be serious even if you have just been dinged.

All concussions are serious. A concussion can affect your ability to do schoolwork and other activities like playing video games, working on a computer, studying, driving or exercising. Most people with a concussion get better, but it is important to give your brain time to heal.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show right up after the injury or may not appear to be noticed until days or weeks after the injury.

Signs Observed by Parents/Guardians/Agents:

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall event prior to hit or fall
- Cannot recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Players:

- Headache or pressure in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness; double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not feel right or is feeling down

What should you, the player, do if you think you have a concussion?

- Tell your coaches or parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel

fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates may have a concussion.

- Get a medical checkup. This is required before the player will be allowed to return to play.
- Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Additional concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get written permission from a qualified health care provider to return to play.

What should parents/guardians do if they think their child has a concussion?

- Seek medical attention right away. A qualified health care provider will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
- Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. You will not be permitted to let your child return to play until a qualified health care provider says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
- Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion. Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

How can you prevent a concussion?

Follow the coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.

- Practice good sportsmanship.
- Use the proper equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards and eye and mouth guards). IN ORDER FOR EQUIPMENT TO PROTECT YOU, it must be the right equipment for the game, position and activity; it must be worn correctly and used every time you play.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion

For more information about concussions visit:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html>