

## **Concussion Information**

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. Concussions are often caused by an impact to the head, or to another part of the body, with the force transmitted to the head. Concussions disrupt the way the brain normally works, and vary greatly in severity. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** You can't see a concussion, and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms may show up right away, or can take hours or days to fully appear. Seek medical attention immediately if you suspect your child has suffered a concussion.

### **Signs observed by teammates, parents, or coaches may include that the athlete:**

Appears dazed or confused	Has a vacant facial expression ("blank stare")	Is unsure of events of game, score, opponent
Confused about assignment	Moves clumsily/appears uncoordinated	Can't recall events from before the injury
Has slurred speech	Answers questions slowly or can't answer	Can't recall events from after the injury
Loss of Consciousness	Has seizures or convulsions	Shows behavior or personality changes

### **Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

Headaches or Pressure	Clear fluid from the ears/nose	Nausea/Vomiting	Neck Pain	Balance Problems or Dizziness
Blurred or double vision	Sensitive to light or noise	Drowsiness	Amnesia	Feels sluggish or slowed down
Feeling foggy or groggy	Changes in sleep patterns	Fatigue/no energy	Sadness	Mood/emotional changes
Nervousness or anxiety	Concentration problems	Memory problems	Confusion	Repeats same question/comments

### **What happens if my child keeps playing with a concussion or returns too soon?**

Athletes with signs/symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play while experiencing signs or symptoms of a concussion leaves the student-athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is increased risk of significant brain damage from a concussion for a period of time after a concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling ("second impact syndrome") with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that teenage athletes will often under-report symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. We urge parents to be especially vigilant and watchful, as they know their child best, and are best able to notice changes in the child that may result from a concussion. All suspected concussions should be reported to the Certified Athletic Trainers as soon as possible. An IMPACT baseline testing is offered to student-athlete who participates in a school sponsored sport and is mandatory for contact sports. Baseline testing is available by team, before the start of the each season and by appointment with the Certified Athletic Trainers. Each student-athlete will be administered two baselines in their high school career (in 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade). Post-concussion testing is administered 24-72 hours after a concussion is suspected or diagnosed, once symptoms have resolved and before a student-athlete's follow-up appointment with a licensed physician. The post-concussion results can then be used in conjunction with the baseline score to help the Certified Athletic Trainers and the licensed physician in their assessment, treatment, and return to play criteria.

### **If you think your child has suffered a concussion...**

If you notice signs or symptoms of a concussion in your child, seek immediate medical attention immediately from an appropriate medical professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, or your hospital's Emergency Department. Any athlete suspected of suffering a concussion must be removed from the game or practice immediately, and may not return until the athlete is evaluated (and cleared in writing) by an appropriate medical professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. An appropriate medical professional is a licensed physician who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, a licensed or certified health care professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and designated by such licensed physician (e.g. Certified Athletic Trainer), and a licensed psychologist neuropsychologically trained in the evaluation and management of concussions or who has postdoctoral training in neuropsychology and specific training in the evaluation or management of concussions. Besides managing your child's concussion and return to play, the Certified Athletic Trainers will also help coordinate with your child's coaches, Nurse, academic counselor and teachers. If your student-athlete has suffered a concussion please contact your school's Certified Athletic Trainer by email or phone and leave a detailed message including athlete's name, grade, sport, details of the injury, and contact information. More information about concussions is available at [www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/](http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/).