

HEADS UP CONCUSSION

A Fact Sheet for ATHLETES

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

It's Better to miss one game than the whole season

A concussion is a brain injury that:
Is caused by a bump or blow to the head
Can change the way your brain normally works
Can occur during practices or games in any sport
Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out
Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged"

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision
Bothered by light
Bothered by noise
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Difficulty paying attention
Memory problems ° Confusion ° Does not "feel right"

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

- Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

Get a medical checkup. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK 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. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

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

Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Use the proper sports 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, or activity

Worn correctly and fit well > Used every time you play

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:

www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports and/or www.cdc.gov/injury

A Fact Sheet for PARENTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians 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
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Can't recall events after hit or fall
Symptoms Reported by Athlete	Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting	Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision	Sensitivity to light
Sensitivity to noise	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Concentration or memory problems	Confusion
Does not "feel right"	

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion. Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport. Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times. Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly. Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. Keep your child out of play. Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional 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.
3. 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.

CONCUSSION PLEDGE INFORMATION FORM

STUDENT/ATHLETE

I, _____, understand that concussions are serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the fact sheet for athletes in the handbook.

I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in myself, or a teammate, that I must REPORT it immediately to a coach, athletic trainer, or parent.

I pledge to not play my sport again until I'm cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that I RECOVER completely before returning to play.

Athlete's Signature _____ *Date* _____

PARENT/GUARDIAN

I, _____, understand that concussions can be serious injuries. I understand that if not handled properly, concussions may lead to permanent brain injury or death.

I have read the Fact Sheet for parents in the handbook.

I pledge that if I RECOGNIZE symptoms of concussion in my child, that I will REPORT it to the Coach or athletic trainer immediately.

I pledge to not allow my child to play again until they are cleared by a doctor and complete a graduated process (BRAIN protocol). This will help ensure that my child RECOVER completely before returning to play.

Signature _____ *Date* _____