



Concussion Information for Parents and Athletes

ALL athletes who suffer a concussion must be cleared by the athletic trainer and the student's licensed healthcare provider before returning to play. The athlete must be symptom free and complete a functional return-to-play progression before being cleared to participate to ensure a safe return to sport.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that temporarily changes how the brain normally works. It is usually caused by a direct blow or jolt to the head, face, or body with an “impulsive force” transmitted to the head. Signs and symptoms of a concussion can include dizziness, headache, vomiting, confusion, acting dazed, forgetting what happened before or after the injury, and/or loss of consciousness. A person does NOT need to be “knocked out” or lose consciousness to have a concussion. Other words or terms for a concussion include *mild traumatic brain injury* (mild TBI) and *mild closed-head injury*.

What are the possible short term effects of concussions?

Most young people will recover completely from a single concussion within one to two weeks. However, some people can take longer to recover than others. Common problems seen after a concussion are listed below. You should watch for these problems. Talk with your child's licensed healthcare provider about any changes that you notice in these areas:

Physical	Thinking (Cognitive)	Behavioral or Emotional
Headaches	Slowed Thinking	Irritability or Grouchiness
Sick to Stomach	Trouble Paying Attention	Easily Upset /Frustrated
Dizziness	Difficulty Remembering	Nervousness
Low Energy Level	Acting like “in a fog”	Sadness
Trouble with vision	Easily Confused	Acting without thinking
Bothered by Light	School Performance Suffers	Personality changes
Sleeping Problems		

** Please note that with a concussion your child may only display one of the above symptoms or a combination of symptoms. Regardless of the number of symptoms experienced, management of the concussion will remain the same.*

What are the possible long term effects of a concussion?

There is a possibility of long term effects on a person's health when a concussion is sustained. These effects can include Post-concussion syndrome, Dementia Pugilistica, and the possibility that the affected person may suffer from cumulative effects of multiple concussions. In Post-concussion syndrome, symptoms do not resolve for weeks, months, or years after a concussion, and may occasionally be permanent. Symptoms may include headaches, dizziness, fatigue, anxiety, memory and attention problems, sleep problems, and irritability. Dementia Pugilistica, or chronic encephalopathy, is an example of the cumulative damage that can occur as the result of multiple concussions or less severe blows to the head. The condition can result in cognitive and physical deficits such as Parkinsonism,

speech and memory problems, slowed mental processing, tremor, and inappropriate behavior. It shares features with Alzheimer's disease. Cumulative effects may include psychiatric disorders and loss of long-term memory. Three or more concussions are also associated with a fivefold greater chance of developing Alzheimer's disease earlier and a threefold greater chance of developing memory deficits. After the initial concussion, there is a period in which the brain is particularly vulnerable to further injury. If an athlete sustains a second concussion during this period, the risk of permanent brain injury increases significantly and the consequences of a seemingly mild second concussion can be very severe, and even result in death (i.e., "second impact syndrome").

If your child has sustained a suspected concussion, the athletic trainer and/or coach at your athlete's school will provide you with further medical instruction, which could include immediate transportation to the ER. Before your child can return to play, he/she must have a written medical release from the student's licensed healthcare provider **and** the athletic trainer at the athlete's school. An information sheet will be provided to you as will our return to play guidelines. For more information or educational resources, please contact the Athletic Department or the Certified Athletic Trainer at your athlete's school.

By signing this form, you are acknowledging that you have received, read, and understand this information provided to you regarding concussions.

I, _____, parent/guardian of _____, have received, read, and understand the information provided to me on concussions. If I have further questions, I will contact the appropriate personnel listed above.

Signature (Parent/Guardian)

Date

Signature (Student Athlete)

Date