Blue Ridge Lacrosse Club Concussion Policy

**Our perspective:** Blue Ridge Lacrosse Club is very serious about age appropriate play and protecting our players from all injuries, but in particular we are attentive to the very real dangers and consequences of TBI or Traumatic Brain Injury, what we commonly call “concussions.”

**A definition:** A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head, or even a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. Even what appears to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions range from mild to severe and no loss of consciousness is required to sustain a concussion. You cannot see a concussion – it is NOT a bruise to the brain and therefore is typically not an injury which appears on CAT scans or MRI’s. The signs and symptoms of a concussion may appear right after an injury, or may take several hours or even days to fully appear. For this reason, the cooperation and understanding of a player’s parents and or/guardians is critical.

**Our guide:** US Lacrosse, the national governing body for youth lacrosse in the country, is leading the way to ensuring concussion awareness and prevention in youth lacrosse, and has partnered with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The CDC, in conjunction with numerous leading experts in the medical and sports field, has compiled concussion related resources to assist youth sports’ programs, parents and players. Blue Ridge Lacrosse strongly recommends that ALL parents/guardians, along with their sons and daughters, familiarize themselves with this information, which can be found on the CDC website (links provided below).

**Our commitment:** Blue Ridge Lacrosse is committed to educating its coaches, parents and players about the seriousness of concussions. All of our coaches are provided information on preventing, recognizing, and responding to a concussion.

**If a concussion occurs:** Recognizing the signs of a concussion and the proper treatment of a concussion requires the cooperation of the parents, the player, the family’s medical provider and the coach to ensure that the best information and decisions are made for that player’s safety. The Blue Ridge policy for any player that is believed to have sustained a concussion, no matter how severe, is for the coach to remove that player from participation and seek medical attention:

* When in doubt, leave the player out.
* No player may return to game play or practice on the same day of a sustained concussion.
* Any player suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by an appropriate health care professional that day.
* No player who the coaches believe has sustained a concussion – whether by exhibiting signs of a concussion or having sustained a blow to the head – will return to the field for practice or a game without the express written medical authorization/permission from the child’s medical provider, stating specifically that the child is cleared to participate in youth sports and in particular, lacrosse.
* After a player has been cleared by a trained medical professional and written permission/authorization has been provided to the coach, the player should be gradually returned to play. The Coach shall monitor the player to see if he/she remains symptom free through non-contact drills, such as conditioning and running drills, then onto non-contact drills such as line drills, shooting drills, and passing drills.
* If symptoms arise during a day of activity, activity should be stopped immediately and the player should return to rest and a gradual reintroduction of activity may begin the following day.
* NO player who returns from a concussion, after proper written authorization has been provided to the Coach, shall participate in a GAME until that player has participated in a minimum of TWO (2) practices.

To assist in the effort to protect our players’ most important asset – their brains – we ask all parents to spend the time to review the CDC website, and the “Heads’ Up: Concussion in Youth Sports” tool kit, by following the link below:

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>