

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

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What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a bump, twist, blow, or jolt to the head or body. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way your brain normally works. You do not need to be unconscious or “knocked out” in order to have a concussion, and even sustaining a “ding” or “having your bell rung” constitutes as a concussion. Signs and symptoms may appear right after the injury or may even take a few days or weeks to appear. Athletes who continue to play while still experiencing symptoms of a concussion risk themselves for re-injury, permanent brain damage, and even death.

Some Signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- ❖ Headache
- ❖ Nausea or vomiting
- ❖ Blurred or double vision
- ❖ Dizziness or loss of balance
- ❖ Memory difficulty
- ❖ Confused or distracted
- ❖ Difficulty talking or not making sense
- ❖ Drowsiness or fatigue
- ❖ Ringing in your ears
- ❖ Restlessness, irritability, or sadness
- ❖ Any changes in usual personality
- ❖ Slowness responding to questions or directions
- ❖ Unable to concentrate
- ❖ Sensitive to noises
- ❖ Sensitive to light
- ❖ Difference in pupil size
- ❖ Blank or vacant stare or expression
- ❖ Feeling “foggy” or sluggish
- ❖ Loss of consciousness

Care of a concussion:

- According to Connecticut’s state law (Connecticut Public Act 10-62), if an athlete presents or complains of any of these signs or symptoms, immediately **REMOVE** from play and refer to the athletic trainer.
- The athletic trainer will assess the athlete
- **UNDER NO CIRCUMSTANCE IS THE ATHLETE TO RETURN TO PLAY THAT SAME DAY**

- Athlete should sit out until have no symptoms with rest, no symptoms with every day activities, including school-related activities, and no symptoms with exercise (as shown through return to play protocol)
- Any athlete that has sustained a concussion must be cleared by a physician trained in concussion management before he can complete the return to play protocol.

Return to Play Protocol (all under the supervision of the physician & athletic trainer):

NOTE: Day 1 starts the day after all symptoms have resolved. The athlete will progress daily to build up to full contact. If any symptoms return while he is exercising, the athlete must return to the previous level.

- DAY 1: Athlete can begin low-impact aerobic activity such as walking, stationary bike, etc.
- DAY 2: Sport specific aerobic training: running
- DAY 3: Non-contact skill-specific drills: throwing a ball
- DAY 4: Full contact in practice setting
- DAY 5: May return to full play.

NO ATHLETE IS ALLOWED TO RETURN TO PRACTICE/GAME SITUATION UNTIL ALL LEVELS HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED.