

FIELD HOCKEY FEDERATION
CONCUSSION POLICY, PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOL

The Field Hockey Federation has created the following policy that will be effective as of the 2017 Spring Season and until further notice.

OBJECTIVE: To establish a policy that will provide all members associated with the FHF, including players, parents, coaches, managers, referees, and volunteers, with guidelines relating to how to recognize signs of a concussion, procedures for dealing with athletes and parents when a concussion is suspected, as well as mandatory rules concerning the return to play for athletes.

POLICY OVERVIEW: Neither referees, coaches, supervisors, or parents/guardians are expected to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of an appropriate licensed health-care provider. Referees, coaches, supervisors and parents/guardians are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with concussions (as discussed below). A coach or team manager must remove an athlete from a game or practice for further evaluation if an athlete is showing signs, symptoms or behaviors associated with concussions. If a referee, supervisor, or parent/guardian observes questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior, the referee, supervisor, or parent/guardian must notify the coach or team manager. In the case of a youth athlete, following the removal from a game or practice due to a suspected concussion, the coach, team manager, or a supervisor (if the coach is a minor), shall complete the Field Hockey Federation Possible Concussion Notification Form and provide it to the youth athlete’s parent or guardian with a copy to the field supervisor. The impacted athlete is prohibited from participating in any Field Hockey Federation event for the remainder of the day (regardless of medical clearance), must obtain written permission from a licensed health-care provider in order to return to play, and must provide such written permission to the Field Hockey Federation. The Field Hockey Federation shall maintain a copy of the Possible Concussion Notification Form and written permission from the appropriate licensed health-care provider returning the player to competition for a period of two years. Parents (if the athlete is a minor) and/or athletes are required to sign and return a Concussion Info Sheet to participate in league events and competitions.

Concussion: A traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. Medically, a concussion is a complex, pathophysiological event in the brain that is induced by trauma. It may OR MAY NOT involve a loss of consciousness. A concussion can result in a myriad of symptoms of varying length and severity. These symptoms may be physical, cognitive, emotional and sleep related. The duration of the concussion signs and symptoms can vary from minutes to days, weeks, months or even longer.

Evaluation:

Step 1: Did a concussion occur?

Evaluate the individual for the presence of any of the following:

- a) Dazed look or confusion about what happened
- b) Memory difficulties
- c) Neck pain, headache, nausea, vomiting, double or blurred vision, noise sensitivity, ringing in ears
- d) Short attention span/difficulty staying focused
- e) Slow reaction time, slurred speech, slow body movements/clumsiness, impaired coordination, difficulty balancing, slow response or difficulty answering questions, fatigue
- f) Abnormal physical or mental behavior

Emergency Treatment:**Step 2: Is emergency treatment needed?**

Evaluate the individual for any of the following:

- a) Spine or neck injury or pain
- b) Loss of consciousness
- c) Seizures
- d) Changes in behavior/unable to recognize familiar people or places/less responsive than usual
- e) Worsening headache
- f) Very drowsy, can't be awakened
- g) Repeated vomiting
- h) Increased confusion OR irritability
- i) Weakness or numbness in the legs or arms

Non-Emergency Evaluation:**Step 3: If a possible concussion has occurred, but no emergency treatment is needed, what next?**

No return to play. Complete and return the 'Possible Concussion Notification Form'. Continue to evaluate the individual every 5-10 minutes over the next 1-2 hours in these areas, and periodically over the next 24 hours:

- Balance, movement, coordination.
- Speech.
- Memory, ability to follow 3 step instruction, speed of response to commands.
- Attention, ability to focus/concentrate, attention to details, any confusion?
- State of consciousness.
- Mood, behavior, personality.
- Headache or sensation of "pressure" in head.
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Light or sound sensitivity.

Step 4: No return to play until athlete is medically cleared

An individual diagnosed with a possible concussion may not return to play the same day as the possible concussion occurred, and may only return to Field Hockey Federation training and competition only after receiving a written clearance from a licensed health care professional. If a licensed health care provider determines that an athlete sustained a concussion or other head injury, the athlete shall complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than seven days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider. It is the coach's or team manager's responsibility to ensure that the written clearance is received by Field Hockey Federation before having such athlete play in a game or participate in a practice after a possible concussion has occurred.

Forms and Documents available on the FHF website:

Concussion Info Sheet – to be signed by parents/players prior to league play and competitions

Possible Concussion Notification Form – to be given to parent and/or athlete and FHF

Medical Clearance Form – required for youth players to return to play