



S P O R T M E D I C I N E & S C I E N C E

C O U N C I L O F M A N I T O B A

CONCUSSION GUIDELINES

FOR PARENTS, COACHES, & ATHLETES

Helping Identify Concussions in Athletes

A CONCUSSION SHOULD BE SUSPECTED IF ONE OR MORE OF THE FOLLOWING VISIBLE CLUES/SIGNS/ SYMPTOMS ARE PRESENT:

VISIBLE CLUES OF SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

Loss of consciousness or responsiveness

(many athletes who sustain a concussion don't lose consciousness)

- Lying motionless on ground/slow to get up
- Unsteady on feet/balance problems
- Grabbing/clutching of head
- Dazed or vacant look
- Confused/not aware of plays or events

VISIBLE CLUES OF SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

- Headache/ pressure in head
- Dizziness
- Neck Pain
- Feeling dazed/ "in a fog"/ "bell rung"
- Feeling slowed down
- Fatigue/ Low energy
- Seeing stars
- Double or blurred vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Ringing in ears
- Nausea/vomiting
- Confusion
- Disorientation (unaware of time/ date/ place)
- Poor balance
- Poor concentration/ easily distracted
- Slow or slurred speech
- Slow responses to questions
- Slow to follow instructions
- Vacant stare/glassy eyed
- Decreased playing ability
- Unusual/inappropriate emotions
- Personality changes/irritability
- Inappropriate behaviour (skate/run wrong direction)
- Loss of consciousness
- Memory deficits/amnesia
- Seizure/convulsion

IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ACTION PLAN

- If the athlete is knocked out, call an ambulance to take him/her to hospital immediately. **DO NOT MOVE THEM UNTIL PARAMEDICS ARRIVE.**
- If an injury to the athlete's neck or back is suspected, **STABILIZE THEIR NECK AND BACK. CALL AN AMBULANCE. DO NOT MOVE THEM UNTIL PARAMEDICS ARRIVE.**
- Any athlete with suspected concussion should be **IMMEDIATELY REMOVED FROM THE PRACTICE OR GAME AND NOT BE ALLOWED TO RETURN TO ACTIVITY** that day
- The athlete who had sustained a suspected concussion should not be left alone and should be assessed medically as soon as possible.
- A doctor or other qualified health care practitioner will advise the athlete who had sustained a suspected concussion on rest and activity levels and other directives on care and precautions.

Return To Activity Following A Concussion

An athlete who has sustained a concussion is at risk of further and more serious injury if they return to activity before their brain and body is ready. The concussed athlete:

- Should not return to any physical activity until given the okay by a doctor or other qualified health care practitioner.
- Must follow a step by step return to activity process guided by a doctor or other qualified health care practitioner.
- Must be free of the signs and symptoms of concussion prior to starting this guided return to activity process.
- Must be free of the signs and symptoms of concussion with a full practice prior to returning to a game or competition.

WHEN IN DOUBT SIT THEM OUT



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