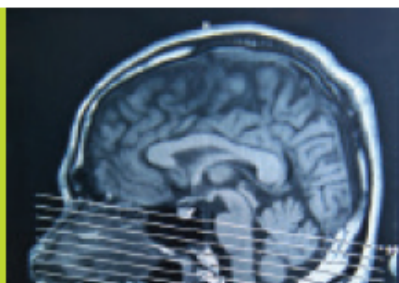


Administrative Procedure 319-Appendix D

Concussion Guidelines for **COACHES & TRAINERS**



WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that cannot be seen on routine x-rays, CT scans, or MRIs. It affects the way a person may think and remember things, and can cause a variety of symptoms.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS AND SIGNS OF CONCUSSION?

A STUDENT DOES NOT NEED TO BE KNOCKED OUT (LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS) TO HAVE HAD A CONCUSSION.

THINKING PROBLEMS	ATHLETE'S COMPLAINTS	OTHER PROBLEMS
• Does not know time, date, place, period of game, opposing team, score of game • General confusion • Cannot remember things that happened before and after the injury • Knocked out	• Headache • Dizziness • Feels dazed • Feels "dinged" or stunned; "having my bell rung" • Sees stars, flashing lights • Ringing in the ears • Sleepiness • Loss of vision • Sees double or blurry • Stomachache, stomach pain, nausea	• Poor coordination or balance • Blank stare/glassy eyed • Vomiting • Slurred speech • Slow to answer questions or follow directions • Easily distracted • Poor concentration • Strange or inappropriate emotions (ie. laughing, crying, getting mad easily) • Not playing as well

WHAT CAUSES A CONCUSSION?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or a blow to the body which causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion (ie. a ball to the head, being checked into the boards in hockey).

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF AN ATHLETE GETS A CONCUSSION?

The athlete should stop playing the sport right away. They should not be left alone and should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible that day. If an athlete is knocked out, call an ambulance to take them to a



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CONCUSSION GUIDELINES FOR COACHES & TRAINERS



hospital immediately. Do not move the athlete or remove athletic equipment like a helmet as there may also be a cervical spine injury; wait for paramedics to arrive.

An athlete with a concussion should not go back to play that day, even if they say they are feeling better. Problems caused by a head injury can get worse later that day or night. They should not return to sports until he/she has been seen by a doctor.

HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR THE STUDENT TO GET BETTER?

The signs and symptoms of a concussion often last for 7-10 days but may last much longer. In some cases, athletes may take many weeks or months to heal. Having had previous concussions may increase the chance that a person may take longer to heal.

HOW IS A CONCUSSION TREATED?

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT AN ATHLETE DOES NOT GO BACK TO SPORTS IF THEY HAVE ANY CONCUSSION SYMPTOMS OR SIGNS.

Return to sport and activity must follow a step-wise approach:

STEP 1) No activity, complete rest. Once back to normal and cleared by a doctor, go to step 2.

STEP 2) Light exercise such as walking or stationary cycling, for 10-15 minutes.

STEP 3) Sport specific aerobic activity (ie. skating in hockey, running in soccer), for about 20-30 minutes. **NO CONTACT.**

STEP 4) "On field" practice such as ball drills, shooting drills, and other activities with **NO CONTACT** (ie. no checking, no heading the ball, etc.).

STEP 5) "On field" practice with body contact, once cleared by a doctor.

STEP 6) Game play.

Note: Each step must take a minimum of one day. If the athlete has any symptoms of a concussion

(e.g. headache, feeling sick to his/her stomach) that come back at any step, **STOP** activity, wait 24-48 hours, and resume activity at previous step. This protocol must be individualized to the athlete, their injury and the sport they are returning to.

WHEN CAN AN ATHLETE WITH A CONCUSSION RETURN TO SPORT?

It is very important that an athlete not play any sports if they have any signs or symptoms of concussion. The athlete must rest until he/she is completely back to normal. When he/she is back to normal and has been seen by a doctor, he/she can then go through the steps of increasing activity described above. When the athlete has progressed through these steps with no symptoms or problems, and has received clearance from a doctor, he/she may return to play. If you are unsure if an athlete should play, remember...

when in doubt, sit them out!