



Safe Concussion Outcome, Recovery & Education (SCORE) Program Children's National Medical Center

SCORE Program Services

- ◆ Concussion Education Workshops
- ◆ Baseline Testing
- ◆ Return to Play Guidance
- ◆ Post-Injury Clinics
- ◆ School Support

GET THE FACTS: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

- ◆ A concussion is a type of mild traumatic brain injury.
- ◆ It is defined as a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, resulting in any change in behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.

HOW OFTEN DO CONCUSSIONS OCCUR?

- ◆ Up to 3.8 million sports and recreation concussions occur per year in children and adults.

WHAT SIGNS SHOULD I LOOK FOR?

If any of these signs are present the student-athlete may be concussed and should be taken out of play and evaluated.

- ◆ Appears dazed or stunned
- ◆ Confused about assignment
- ◆ Forgets plays
- ◆ Unsure of game, score, or opponent
- ◆ Moves clumsily
- ◆ Answers questions slowly
- ◆ Shows behavior or personality changes
- ◆ Can't recall events prior to or after hit
- ◆ Loses consciousness*

*Only about 10% of all children who suffer a concussion lose consciousness.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

◆ Physical

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Vision problems
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Dizziness

◆ Sleep Disturbance

- Sleep more or less than usual
- Difficulty falling or staying asleep

◆ Cognitive

- Feeling mentally foggy or groggy
- Feeling slowed down
- Difficulty concentrating
- Trouble learning/remembering

◆ Emotional/Mood

- Irritability
- Sadness
- Nervousness
- Feeling emotional

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

All suspected concussions should be removed from play and evaluated.

- ◆ Inform your pediatrician and school following the injury.
- ◆ An individual with a known or suspected injury should never return to play on the same day and should be evaluated and "cleared" by a licensed healthcare professional with experience in concussion evaluation before returning to sports.
- ◆ Cognitive and physical activities should be minimized.
- ◆ Physical and mental rest following a concussion allows the brain to recover more quickly.
- ◆ School modifications, including a reduction of school-based demands are often beneficial.
- ◆ Avoid sports and any activity with a risk of re-injury.
- ◆ Individuals who return to sports or physical activities too soon after an injury are more likely to be re-injured, have a longer recovery time, and long-term difficulties.

HOW CAN I PROTECT MYSELF FROM A CONCUSSION?

The *best* way to prevent a concussion is by following the rules of the game, using proper athletic form and technique, and practicing good sportsmanship. Play hard, but play smart!



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www.childrensnational.org/score
www.cdc.gov/concussion