

CONCUSSION FACT SHEET

It's better to miss one game than an entire season...
If you're in doubt, please be evaluated by an athletic trainer!



What is a concussion?

A concussion can occur when an individual receives a traumatic force to the head or the upper body thus causing the brain to move inside of the skull. A concussion causes a change in the mental status of an individual. It can also affect their physical and emotional functioning. Symptoms vary from one person to another and can last for minutes, days, and sometimes even weeks after a concussion. A concussion can occur during practice or competition in **ANY** sport and can also occur without having a loss of consciousness.

How can I prevent a concussion?

- Do not initiate contact with your head or helmet. You can still get a concussion if you're wearing a helmet.
- Avoid intentionally striking an opponent in the head
- Follow the Athletic Department safety manual for your respective sport
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times
- Practice and perfect the skills of your sport

Signs and Symptoms of a concussion

As stated above signs and symptoms vary from one person to another and an individual does not have to lose consciousness to sustain a concussion. If you suspect a concussion the following symptoms should be evaluated by a qualified medical professional.

<u>Cognitive Symptoms</u>	<u>Physical Symptoms</u>	<u>Emotional Symptoms</u>
Poor attention and concentration	Headaches	Nervousness/Anxiety
Problems remembering	Vacant Stare	Excessive sadness
Difficulty following conversation	Appears dazed or stunned	Excessive laughter
Answers questions slowly	Dizziness	Irritability
Asks same question repeatedly	Fuzzy/Blurry vision	Personality Changes
Mentally foggy	Clumsiness/Balance problems	Decrease in activity
Slowed reaction time	Sleeps more or less than usual	Loss of appetite
	Appears fatigued, tired or sleepy	
	Nausea/Vomiting	
	Hypersensitivity to light or sound	

****Or any other signs or symptoms that seem to develop rapidly****

What should you do if you suspect a concussion?

Don't hide it! Tell your athletic trainer or coach. Never ignore a blow to the head. Also tell your athletic trainer or coach if you suspect a teammate might have a concussion!

Get checked out! Your athletic trainer has been trained in the management and care of concussions. They are also able to refer you to physicians or other medical professionals who have advanced training in concussion management and treatment.

Take time to recover! When you are concussed your brain needs time to heal. If you return to play before your brain is fully healed you can suffer from permanent brain damage or death. Did you know that...

- The developing brain of a child or teen is more susceptible to concussion and takes longer to heal!
- Amnesia (memory problems) NOT loss of consciousness is the main indicator in concussion severity!
- Prior concussions lower your threshold for sustaining subsequent concussions!
- Premature physical and/or mental exertion before the brain is fully healed can prolong recovery and worsen the outcome of a concussion!

