



KNOW YOUR CONCUSSION ABCs

Assess the situation Be alert for signs and symptoms Contact a health care provider

Wisconsin Fact Sheet for Parents

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head and can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump to the head can be serious.

Concussions can have a more serious effect on a young, developing brain and need to be addressed correctly.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. It is important to watch for changes in how your child or teen is acting or feeling, if symptoms are getting worse, or if s/he just "doesn't feel right." Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

If your child or teen reports **one or more** of the symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. Children and teens are among those at greatest risk for concussion.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GURADIANS

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about events
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to the hit, bump, or fall
- Can't recall events after the hit, bump, or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Forgets class schedule or assignments

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY YOUR CHILD

Thinking/Remembering:

- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Feeling more slowed down
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

Physical:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Fatigue or feeling tired
- Blurry or double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Numbness or tingling
- Does not "feel right"

Emotional:

- Irritable
- Sad
- More emotional than usual
- Nervous

Sleep*:

- Drowsy
- Sleeps less than usual
- Sleeps more than usual
- Has trouble falling asleep

*Only ask about sleep symptoms if the injury occurred on a prior day.

Materials adapted from U.S. Dept of HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



DANGER SIGNS

Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. Your child or teen should be seen in an emergency department right away if s/he has:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Difficult to arouse
- Severe headache or worsening headache
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

Children and teens with a suspected concussion should NEVER return to sports or recreation activities on the same day the injury occurred. They should delay returning to their activities until a health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussion says they are symptom-free and provide written clearance to return to activity. This means, until permitted, not returning to:

- Physical Education (PE) class,
- Sports conditioning, weight lifting, practices and games, or
- Physical activity at recess.

What should I do if my child or teen has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussions can direct concussion management and review when it is safe for your child to return to normal activities, including school (concentration and learning) and physical activity. If your child or teen has been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a suspected or confirmed concussion or head injury, they may not participate again until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.
2. Help them take time to get better. If your child or teen has a concussion, her or his brain needs time to heal. Your child or teen should limit activities while he/she is recovering from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, using a computer, texting, or playing video games may worsen or prolong concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness). Rest will help your child recover more quickly. Your child may become upset that he/she cannot participate in activities.

3. Together with your child or teen, learn more about concussions. Talk about the potential long-term effects of concussion and the problems caused by returning too soon to daily activities to quickly (especially physical activity and learning/concentration).

How can I help my child return to school safely after a concussion?

Help your child or teen get needed support when returning to school after a concussion. Talk with your child's school administrators, teachers, school nurse, coach, and counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms. Your child may feel frustrated, sad, and even angry because he/she cannot keep up with schoolwork and learn as well after a concussion. Your child may also feel isolated from peers and social networks. Talk often with your child about these issues and offer your support and encouragement. As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually. Children and teens who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- Take rest breaks as needed,
- Spend fewer hours at school,
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments,
- Receive help with schoolwork, and/or
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer.

To download this fact sheet in Spanish, please visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion. Para obtener una copia electrónica de esta hoja de información en español, por favor visite: www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

To learn more about concussions go to :

www.cdc.gov/Concussion; www.wiaawi.org; www.nfhs.org



Concussion Information - When in Doubt, Sit Them Out!

1. Before a student may participate in practice or competition: At the beginning of a season for a youth athletic activity, the person operating the youth athletic activity shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to each person who will be coaching that youth athletic activity and to each person who wishes to participate in that youth athletic activity. No person may participate in a youth athletic activity unless the person returns the information sheet signed by the person and, if he or she is under the age of 19, by his or her parent or guardian.
2. An athletic coach, or official involved in a youth athletic activity, or health care provider shall remove a person from the youth athletic activity if the coach, official, or health care provider determines that the person exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury or the coach, official, or health care provider suspects the person has sustained a concussion or head injury.
3. A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity may not participate in a youth athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.

<p>These are some SIGNS concussion (what others can see in an injured athlete):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dazed or stunned appearance Change in the level of consciousness or awareness Confused about assignment Forgets plays Unsure of score, game, opponent Clumsy Answers more slowly than usual Shows behavior changes Loss of consciousness Asks repetitive questions or memory concerns 	<p>These are some of the more common SYMPTOMS of concussion (what an injured athlete feels):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Headache Nausea Dizzy or unsteady Sensitive to light or noise Feeling mentally foggy Problems with concentration and memory Confused Slow
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Injured athletes can exhibit many or just a few of the signs and/or symptoms of concussion. However, if a player exhibits any signs or symptoms of concussion, the responsibility is simple: remove them from participation. "When in doubt sit them out."

It is important to notify a parent or guardian when an athlete is thought to have a concussion. Any athlete with a concussion must be seen by an appropriate health care provider before returning to practice (including weight lifting) or competition.

RETURN TO PLAY

Current recommendations are for a stepwise return to play program. In order to resume activity, the athlete must be symptom free and off any pain control or headache medications. The athlete should be carrying a full academic load without any significant accommodations. Finally, the athlete must have clearance from an appropriate health care provider.

The program described below is a guideline for returning concussed athletes when they are symptom free. Athletes with multiple concussions and athletes with prolonged symptoms often require a very different return to activity program and should be managed by a physician that has experience in treating concussion.

The following program allows for one step per 24 hours. The program allows for a gradual increase in heart rate/physical exertion, coordination, and then allows contact. If symptoms return, the athlete should stop activity and notify their healthcare provider before progressing to the next level.

STEP ONE: About 15 minutes of light exercise: stationary biking or jogging

STEP TWO: More strenuous running and sprinting in the gym or field without equipment

STEP THREE: Begin non-contact drills in full uniform. May also resume weight lifting

STEP FOUR: Full practice with contact

STEP FIVE: Full game clearance

118.293 Concussion and head injury.

(1) In this section:

(a) "Credential" means a license or certificate of certification issued by this state.

(b) "Health care provider" means a person to whom all of the following apply:

1. He or she holds a credential that authorizes the person to provide health care.

2. He or she is trained and has experience in evaluating and managing pediatric concussions and head injuries.

3. He or she is practicing within the scope of his or her credential.

(c) "Youth athletic activity" means an organized athletic activity in which the participants, a majority of whom are under 19 years of age, are engaged in an athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity, or in practice or preparation for an organized athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity. "Youth athletic activity" does not include a college or university activity or an activity that is incidental to a nonathletic program.

(2) In consultation with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, the department shall develop guidelines and other information for the purpose of educating athletic coaches and pupil athletes and their parents or guardians about the nature and risk of concussion and head injury in youth athletic activities.

(3) At the beginning of a season for a youth athletic activity, the person operating the youth athletic activity shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to each person who will be coaching that youth athletic activity and to each person who wishes to participate in that youth athletic activity. No person may participate in a youth athletic activity unless the person returns the information sheet signed by the person and, if he or she is under the age of 19, by his or her parent or guardian.

(4) (a) An athletic coach, or official involved in a youth athletic activity, or health care provider shall remove a person from the youth athletic activity if the coach, official, or health care provider determines that the person exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury or the coach, official, or health care provider suspects the person has sustained a concussion or head injury.

(b) A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity under par. (a) may not participate in a youth athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.

(5) (a) Any athletic coach, official involved in an athletic activity, or volunteer who fails to remove a person from a youth athletic activity under sub. (4) (a) is immune from civil liability for any injury resulting from that omission unless it constitutes gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

(b) Any volunteer who authorizes a person to participate in a youth athletic activity under sub. (4) (b) is immune from civil liability for any injury resulting from that act unless the act constitutes gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

(6) This section does not create any liability for, or a cause of action against, any person.

PARENT & ATHLETE AGREEMENT

As a Parent and as an Athlete it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions. By signing this form you are stating that you understand the importance of recognizing and responding to the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion or head injury.

Parent Agreement:

I _____ have **read** the Parent Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused. I also understand the common signs, symptoms, and behaviors. I agree that my child must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected.

I understand that it is my responsibility to seek medical treatment if a suspected concussion is reported to me.

I understand that my child cannot return to practice/play until providing written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to his/her coach.

I understand the possible consequences of my child returning to practice/play too soon.

Parent/Guardian

Signature _____ Date _____

Athlete Agreement:

I _____ have **read** the Athlete Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused.

I understand the importance of reporting a suspected concussion to my coaches and my parents/guardian.

I understand that I must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected. I understand that I must provide written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to my coach before returning to practice/play.

I understand the possible consequence of returning to practice/play too soon and that my brain needs time to heal.

Athlete

Signature _____ Date _____



COACHES AGREEMENT

As a Coach it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions. By signing this form you are stating that you understand the importance of recognizing and responding to concussions and head injuries per the guidelines set forth by the Department of Public Instruction and Statute 118.293.

Coaches Agreement:

I _____ have read the Coaches Concussion and Head Injury Information and understand what a concussion is and how it may be caused. I also understand what the signs, symptoms, and behaviors are and agree to remove the athlete from practice/play if exhibited and/or a concussion is suspected.

I understand that it is my responsibility to inform the parents/guardian if I suspect a concussion or if a suspected concussion is reported to me and that the athlete cannot return to practice or play before providing me with written clearance from an appropriate health care provider.

I understand the possible consequences of the athlete returning to practice/play too soon.

Coach
Signature _____ Date _____

Sport _____

School/District _____

Team/League _____

Age Level _____

