

A FACT SHEET FOR High School Athletes



CDC HEADS UP
SAFE BRAIN. STRONGER FUTURE.

This sheet has information to help you protect yourself from concussion or other serious brain injury and know what to do if a concussion occurs.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that affects how your brain works. It can happen when your brain gets bounced around in your skull after a fall or hit to the head.

What Should I Do If I Think I Have a Concussion?



Report It. Tell your coach, parent, and athletic trainer if you think you or one of your teammates may have a concussion. It's up to you to report your symptoms. Your coach and team are relying on you. Plus, you won't play your best if you are not feeling well.

Get Checked Out. If you think you have a concussion, do not return to play on the day of the injury. Only a healthcare provider can tell whether you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to school and play. The sooner you get checked out, the sooner you may be able to safely return to play.



Give Your Brain Time to Heal.

A concussion can make everyday activities, such as going to school, harder. You may need extra help getting back to your normal activities. Be sure to update your parents and doctor about how you are feeling.

Why Should I Tell My Coach and Parent About My Symptoms?



- Playing or practicing with a concussion is dangerous and can lead to a longer recovery.
- While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. This can put you at risk for a more serious injury to your brain and can even be fatal.

**GOOD TEAMMATES KNOW:
IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.**



cdc.gov/HEADSUP

How Can I Tell If I Have a Concussion?

You may have a concussion if you have any of these symptoms after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body:

-  **Get a headache**
-  **Feel dizzy, sluggish, or foggy**
-  **Are bothered by light or noise**
-  **Have double or blurry vision**
-  **Vomit or feel sick to your stomach**
-  **Have trouble focusing or problems remembering**
-  **Feel more emotional or “down”**
-  **Feel confused**
-  **Have problems with sleep**

Concussion symptoms usually show up right away, but you might not notice that something “isn’t right” for hours or days. A concussion feels different to each person, so it is important to tell your parents and doctor how you are feeling.

How Can I Help My Team?



Protect Your Brain.

Avoid hits to the head and follow the rules for safe and fair play to lower your chances of getting a concussion. Ask your coaches for more tips.



Be a Team Player.

You play an important role as part of a team. Encourage your teammates to report their symptoms and help them feel comfortable taking the time they need to get better.

The information provided in this document or through linkages to other sites is not a substitute for medical or professional care. Questions about diagnosis and treatment for concussion should be directed to a physician or other healthcare provider.

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To learn more,
go to cdc.gov/HEADSUP



Return to Learning Following a Concussion

School Recommendations

Inform the School Nurse and you school counselor of your concussion.

Pacing is the Key

Determine how long it takes for symptoms to begin or worsen → Student takes a break before symptoms begin or worsen (If symptoms begin after 20 min of study, at 15 minutes of study take a 5 minute break.) → Student gradually increases study time as they heal.

Accommodations to help healing:

Visual

Sun glasses / Blue light glasses
Pre printed notes - request
Decrease brightness on screens
Limit screen / TV time

Audible

Lunch in quiet place
Avoid Music class
Wear ear plugs
Change classes before Bell

Breaks

Rest in Nurse office if symptoms increase no longer than 30 min.
Rest 15 min the end of each bell in quiet place.

Additional Recommendations

Carry water – drink
Physical exercise – walking only until seen by Athletic Trainer or physician.

A physician note is needed if:

If Workload needs to be decreased / adjusted.
Extended time on tests.
Half days of school recommended

How long will recovery take. Every injury is different. The younger you are the longer takes brain to heal.

Average times:

College: 10 day – 2 weeks

High School : 2-4 weeks

Jr High: 3-6 weeks

Grade school: 4-8 weeks.

If you have a tendency toward headaches, anxiety, sleep/learning problems your recovery may take longer.