

CONCUSSION

Fact Sheet

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a blow to the head
 - From contact with another player, hitting a hard surface, or being hit by a piece of equipment such as a bat or ball
- Can cause temporary impairment of brain function
- **Can happen without losing consciousness**
- Can range from mild to severe
- Can present itself differently in each athlete
- Can occur during practice or competitions in ANY sport
- Symptoms may not appear for several hour or days after the injury

How Can I Prevent A Concussion?

Basic steps you can take to protect yourself from a concussion:

- Do not initiate contact with your head and helmet
- Avoid striking an opponent in the head, checking, undercutting, etc.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times

What are the Symptoms of a Concussion?

You can't see a concussion, but there are signs and symptoms that can be noticed right away:

- Headache or "pressure" in the head
- Confusion
- Loss of consciousness
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Feeling irritable or not "feeling right"
- Concentration or memory problems
- Slow reaction time
- Appears dazed or stunned
- Can't recall event prior or after the hit or fall

Exercise or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working, reading or on the computer may cause symptoms such as a headache to reappear or worsen.

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

Don't hide it: Tell your athletic trainer, friend, and physician or Rec Sports staff member if you think you have a concussion. Never ignore a blow to the head, it is a serious injury!

Report it: Do not return to play with signs and symptoms of a concussion. **If symptoms are persistent or worsen throughout the day or night you need to get transportation to the nearest hospital immediately!**

Get checked out: Your physician or the physicians at the Health and Science Center (HSC) will diagnose you if you have a concussion and when you are cleared to return to play in activities. Concussions can affect your ability to perform everyday activities, reaction time, balance, sleep and classroom performance.

Take time to recover: If you have a concussion your brain needs time to heal and rest. While your brain is healing, you are more likely to have a repeat concussion. Repeat concussions can have a slow recovery or increase chance for long-term problems. In rare cases it can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage or it can be fatal.

****The recommendations on this document are in no way a substitute for the direct care of a licensed medical provider.**