



Concussion Basics

Don't forget your ABC's

"ALWAYS Be Conscious" represents an idea to always be aware. While it is important to avoid being knocked-out, it is even more important to understand the facts behind concussions, what to look for if a brain injury is suspected, and the best way to manage if necessary. The resources outlined in this pamphlet are designed to keep you up to date and well informed about concussions as well as ensuring that you never forget your Concussion ABC's!

AND REMEMBER...

"When in doubt, Sit Out!"

Important FACTS...

- You do not have to be hit in the head for a concussion to occur.
- A concussion involves a temporary disruption in brain function, but it usually gets better in 7-10 days with proper management.
- Conventional imaging such as CT or MRI will not usually reveal the injury.
- You do not need to be knocked out to suffer a concussion.
- Always seek medical attention if symptoms get worse.

What is a concussion?

- A CONCUSSION IS A BRAIN INJURY
- It affects the way your brain functions, and can cause a variety of signs and symptoms.
- Any impact that causes a sudden jarring of the brain inside the skull can cause a concussion. This can be to the head, face, neck, or body.

Signs and Symptoms

PHYSICAL

- Headache
- Dizziness
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Ringing in ears
- Blurred or double vision
- Slurred speech
- Sensitivity to light

COGNITIVE

- Decreased reaction time
- Decreased balance/coordination
- Decreased concentration
- Memory problems

EMOTIONAL & BEHAVIOURAL

- Change in mood
- Difficulty sleeping
- Inappropriate reactions to various stimuli
- Feelings of sadness
- Impulsive behaviour

How is a concussion diagnosed?

- The diagnosis of a concussion is made clinically.
- Concussions cannot typically be seen on conventional imaging (e.g. X-Ray, CT, MRI).
- Concussion assessment tools have been designed to help with detection of concussions. For information about the assessment tools please visit: www.parachutecanada.org

Concussion management

- The majority of concussions will resolve within 7-10 days with appropriate management.
- Some individuals may recover faster than others, but it's important to remember..

Everyone is different and every concussion is different!

- The best initial management for a concussion is REST. This means NO sports, NO video games, NO TV, and NO school.
- Once your symptoms have gone, you may follow the "Return to Play Guidelines" to help manage your recovery.

Return to Play guidelines

Step	Description	Duration	Result	Next Step
1	No Activity Complete Rest	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Proceed to next step
2	Start Return to Learn Guidelines at this step. See below for more information.			
	Light Aerobic Activity	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Proceed to next step
			Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
3	Sports Specific Activity	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Proceed to next step
4	Drills Without Contact	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Proceed to next step
5	Drills With Contact	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Proceed to next step
6	Game Play	24 hours	Symptoms	Stop & repeat previous step
			No Symptoms	Monitor for symptoms

Return to Learn guidelines

This should take place during step 2 of the return to play guidelines.

Step 2A: (symptoms improving). Individualized learning activities/strategies based on your recovery should be incorporated to your routine.

This may mean talking to your teacher about your concussion to find something that works for both of you. Concussions can affect academic performance and cognitive, activity should progress slowly (both at school and at home).

Step 2B: (symptom free). You can resume regular learning activities without any individual modification. However, even if you are symptom-free you should be closely monitored. Cognitive activities can sometimes cause concussion symptoms to reappear or worsen. If this happens, talk to your doctor!