

CONCUSSION FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

What is a CONCUSSION?

A concussion is an injury to the brain. A concussion can be from a direct hit to the head or from getting checked or tackled. Symptoms of a concussion may appear immediately or may not appear for several hours or even days. It's important to seek medical attention if your child is exhibiting signs or symptoms of a concussion.

Concussion PREVENTION

- + There are no "concussion proof" helmets available on the market. Wearing appropriate protective gear can reduce the risk of injury, but no equipment can prevent concussions.
- + Make sure that your child is following the rules for their sport. Many rules are designed to prevent unsafe conditions where a concussion may happen.
- + Your athlete should be sufficiently strong to participate at the level of sport they are currently in. This is especially important with the muscles in the neck.
- + Make sure your child is aware of the signs and symptoms of concussion. It is also important that your child understand that they should not hide that they are experiencing symptoms of a concussion.
- + Let your child know if they think that one of their teammates has sustained a concussion they should let their coach know immediately.

If you think YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION

- + **Seek medical care immediately.** A concussion is a serious injury to your child's brain. An appropriate healthcare professional will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it will be safe for your child to return to school and sports.
- + **Rest is the key to recovery.** Both mental and physical rest are key to recovery from a concussion. It is extremely dangerous to return a child to activity while their brain is healing from a concussion. Returning to activity too soon puts your child at risk for permanent brain damage.
- + **Inform your child's school and coach about your child's concussion.** There are both physical and mental effects of a concussion. By alerting your child's school, they can make accommodations to help your child's recovery.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS of a Concussion

SIGNS ARE OBSERVABLE BY OTHERS:

- ... Appears confused or dazed
- ... Can't recall things prior to being injured
- ... Can't recall things after being injured
- ... Loss of balance or coordination
- ... Loss of consciousness — no matter how long
- ... Seems irritable or other personality changes
- ... Forgets routine plays or position on the field

SYMPTOMS ARE FELT BY THE ATHLETE:

- ... Headache
- ... Dizziness
- ... Nausea and/or vomiting
- ... Feeling in a fog or confused
- ... Sensitivity to light or noise
- ... Feels sluggish or tired
- ... Concentration problems
- ... Feels "off" or "doesn't feel right"

Having only one symptom may indicate you have a concussion

For emergency care, Capital Health offers a dedicated Pediatric Emergency Department at Capital Health Medical Center – Hopewell. Neurology and neuropsychology experts from the Capital Institute for Neurosciences can provide thorough evaluation, follow-up, and treatment for teens and adults at our Hopewell and Langhorne locations.



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