

CONCUSSION:

PARENT INFORMATION SHEET



PT | SOLUTIONS™
PHYSICAL THERAPY

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury that disrupts how the brain normally functions. A concussion is usually caused by a direct or indirect blow or jolt to the head. Even though a concussion might be called a “mild” injury it must be taken seriously because it is an injury to the brain.

DID YOU KNOW?

- Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness
- Concussions can't be detected by medical imaging including CT or MRI.
- 1 in 5 athletes will sustain a concussion during a given sports season
- Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS

Your child might require immediate medical attention if he or she exhibits any of the following signs:

- Worsening headache that does not go away
- Unequal pupil size
- Severe drowsiness or change in alertness
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused, restless or agitated
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- Loss of consciousness
- Convulsions or seizures

SIGNS & SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS:

- » Appears dazed or stunned
- » Confused when following instructions
- » More irritable or emotional than usual
- » Significant change in sleep patterns
- » Moves clumsily
- » Answers questions slowly
- » Trouble reading or completing homework
- » Cannot recall events before or after hit or fall
- » Appears sensitive to noise or light

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES:

- » Headache or pressure in head
- » Nausea or vomiting
- » Balance problems or dizziness
- » Double or blurry vision
- » Sensitive to light or noises
- » Dizziness, clumsiness, sleepiness
- » Feels sluggish, hazy, foggy, groggy
- » Attention or concentration problems
- » Confusion or memory loss
- » “Just doesn't feel right”

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WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

- **Following a concussion, rest is key** for the first few days. Physical and cognitive rest for the first 24 to 48 hours is beneficial for recovery. After this point, your child should gradually return to activity based on his or her symptoms under the supervision of an appropriate healthcare professional.
- **Ensure that your child is evaluated immediately by an appropriate healthcare professional.** Try not to judge the severity of the injury yourself. The experts at PT Solutions can work with a student's teachers, coaches and other providers to return your child to the classroom and playing field as quickly and safely as possible
- **Inform the school team** – about your child's injury and symptoms. Many children or adolescents with concussion may require temporary modifications to help them manage their symptoms at school including rest breaks, shortened school days or additional help performing schoolwork.
- **Initiate physical therapy.** Your child does not need to be symptom free at rest to start physical therapy. In fact, your physical therapist can assist with managing resting symptoms including headache, dizziness and neck pain to allow a more expedient return to school and sport.
- **Allow your child to return to play only with permission from a healthcare professional** who has experience in evaluating concussions. Recovery times vary across individuals. You should be wary when permission to return to play is based on amount of time spent "resting," rather than measures of current symptoms and neurocognitive status.

WHAT CAN I DO?



Learn to **recognize the signs and symptoms** of a concussion in your child or his or her teammates.



Encourage your child to **tell medical and/or coaching staff** if they have any of these symptoms or if they notice them in a teammate



Act early. If your child has a concussion, early management with trained medical professionals including physicians, physical therapists and athletic trainers can speed up the recovery process.



Be an advocate. Emphasize your concerns to administrators, coaches or any of the medical team about concussion and safe play.



Ensure that your child follows a **gradual return to play protocol** under the supervision of a healthcare provider with expertise in concussion management.

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