



VFW POST 3670 YOUTH GROUP  
CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

**DEFINITION OF A CONCUSSION**

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a blow, jolt or even a bump to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally functions or works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly by a licensed medical professional or provider.** In other words, even a slight or small bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussions may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, immediately seek medical attention.

**WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

**SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GUARDIANS:**

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about the assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to or after being hit or fall

**Symptoms Reported by Athlete**

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness (even slight)
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel" right

**HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?**

- Every sport is different, but there are steps your child can take to protect themselves from a concussion.
- Ensure that they follow their coach's instructions and rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure that they wear the proper protective equipment for their activity or sport such as helmets, padding, shin guards, eye and mouth guards, but not limited to these).
- Protective equipment must fit properly, be well maintained and be worn consistently and correctly.



- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

**WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?**

- **Seek immediate medical attention.** A licensed medical health professional or provider will be able to determine how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
- **Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a licensed medical health professional or provider says it's "OK for he or she to return to play". Children who return to play too soon while the brain is still healing has a greater risk for a second concussion. A second or later concussions can be even more serious. They can cause permanent damage affecting your child for a lifetime.
- **Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion(s).** Coaches should/must know if your child has had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

**WHAT IS THE PROCEDURE FOR A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION?**

- Any athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a game or practice shall be removed from the activity at that time and for the remainder of the day.
- Any athlete who has been removed may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed medical health professional or provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion(s) and has received a written clearance to return to play from that licensed medical health professional or provider.

**WHAT CAN HAPPEN IF MY CHILD KEEPS ON PLAYING WITH A CONCUSSION OR RETURNS TO PLAY TOO SOON?** Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the initial one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and student-athletes is the key for student-athlete's safety.

**LET YOUR CHILD'S COACH KNOW IMMEDIATELY IF YOU SUSECT YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION!!**

Adapted from the CDC. For more information regarding concussion, you can go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussioninYouthSports>