

# Concussion Awareness

**Always assess airway, breathing and circulation.**

**All players who experience a concussion must be seen by a physician before the player can return to play.**

**Definition:** Change in mental state (confusion) as a result of a trauma. May involve loss of consciousness.

**Mechanism:** Blow to the head, face or jaw.  
May result from a whiplash effect to the neck.

## Types of Concussion

**First Degree:** Player experiences brief period of confusion. There is no loss of consciousness. Symptoms are completely gone in less than fifteen minutes.

**Second Degree:** Player experiences a loss of consciousness (however brief) or player experiences symptoms beyond fifteen minutes. ***Player should see a physician immediately.***

## Common Symptoms and Signs

Vacant Stare	Dizziness
Poor coordination	Ringing in the ears
Delayed responses to questions	Seeing stars
Nausea, vomiting	Sensitivity to light
Inability to focus	Sensitivity to noise
	Headache

***Please note that some symptoms/signs may appear later so player should be observed even after symptoms/signs seem normal.***

## Mental Status Testing

***For information only. Do not attempt to treat a concussion. Always have the player consult a physician.***

**Orientation:** Does the player know what the exact time and place is? Does the player know the circumstances of the injury?

**Concentration:** Can the player spell “world” backwards?

**Memory:** Does the player know the score of the game?



Ontario Brain Injury Association



## Concussion Management

### Any Loss of Consciousness – Initiate Emergency Action Plan and Call an Ambulance

- Rule out possible neck injury
- Remove the player from further play
- Do not administer medication
- Notify the parent or guardian about the injury
- The player does not return to play unless permitted to do so by a physician

## Return To Play

The return to play process only begins after a physician has given the player clearance to return to activity. If any symptoms/signs return during this process, the player must be re-evaluated by a physician.

1. No activity, complete rest. Proceed to step 2 only when symptoms are gone and a physician has given the player clearance.
2. Light aerobic exercise such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms.
3. Sport specific training (e.g. skating).
4. Non-contact drills.
5. Full contact practices.
6. Game play.

Note: Player should proceed through the steps only when it has been demonstrated that there are no return of symptoms. This includes long term symptoms such as, fatigue, irritable behaviour or sleep disturbance. If any symptoms return the player should drop down to the previous level and **must be re-evaluated by a physician.**

## Prevention

### **Players**

- Make sure your helmet fits snugly
- Get a custom fitted mouth guard
- Respect other players

### **Safety Person/ Trainer**

- Discourage checks to the head
- Recognize signs and symptoms of concussion