

Lindsay Independent School District



Concussion Policy

Injury Prevention and Control

What is a concussion?

How do I recognize a possible concussion?

Know your concussion ABC's!

What can I do to prevent a concussion in sports?

What should I do if a concussion occurs?

Return to practice/return to play procedures.

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Concussion Policy

Injury Prevention and Control

School Requirements:

1. The district shall have a written policy.
2. The policy shall address these areas:
 - A. Education of coaching staff
 - B. Education/awareness of parents and players
 - C. Concussion prevention
 - D. Player injury evaluation
 - E. Identification of “appropriate medical personnel”
 - F. Return to practice/play protocol
 - G. Continual monitoring of athletes
 - H. Reporting method

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of **traumatic brain injury**, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur in any sport or recreation activity. So, all coaches, parents, and athletes need to learn concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs.

How Can I Recognize a Possible Concussion?

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

- A forceful bump, blow or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head

AND

- Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking or physical functioning

Athletes who experience **any** of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it’s OK to return to play.

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or “pressure” in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets an instruction	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light
Answers questions slowly	Sensitivity to noise
Loses consciousness (<i>even briefly</i>)	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can’t recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall	Confusion
Can’t recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall	Does not “feel right” or is “feeling down”

Remember, you can’t see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. Most people with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. But for some people, signs and symptoms of concussion can last for days, weeks, or longer

Know Your Concussion ABC's



A — Assess the situation

B — Be alert for signs and symptoms

C — Contact a health care professional

What Can I Do to Prevent Concussions?

As a coach or parent, you play a key role in preventing concussions and responding properly when they occur. Here are some steps you can take to help prevent concussions and ensure the best outcome for your athletes, the team, league or school.

Educate athletes and other parents or coaches about concussion.

Before the first practice, talk to athletes and parents, and other coaches and school officials about the dangers of concussion and potential long-term consequences of concussion. Explain your concerns about concussion and your expectations of safe play. Show the videos and pass out the concussion fact sheets for athletes and for parents at the beginning of the season and again if a concussion occurs. Remind athletes to tell coaching staff right away if they suspect they have a concussion or that a teammate has a concussion.

Monitor the health of your athletes.

Make sure to ask if an athlete has ever had a concussion and insist that your athletes are medically evaluated and are in good condition to participate.

During the Season: Practices and Games – *Insist that safety comes FIRST!!!*

- Teach and practice safe playing techniques
- Encourage athletes to follow the rules of play and to practice good sportsmanship at all times
- Make sure athletes wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

Teach athletes it's not smart to play with a concussion. Rest is vital after a concussion. Sometimes athletes, parents, and other school or league officials wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your athlete convince you that they're "just fine."

Prevent long-term problems. If an athlete has a concussion, their brain needs time to heal. Don't let them return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short time period (hours, days, weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the chances for long-term problems.

Work closely with league or school officials. Be sure that appropriate individuals are available for injury assessment and referrals for further medical care. Enlist health care professionals (including school nurses) to monitor any changes in the athlete's behavior that could indicate that they have a concussion. Ask athletes or parents to report concussions that occurred during any sport or recreation activity. This will help in monitoring injured athletes who participate in multiple sports throughout the year.

Postseason

Keep track of concussion. Coaches should work with other school or league officials to review injuries that occurred during the season. Discuss with others any needs for better concussion prevention or response preparations.

Review your concussion policy and action plan. Discuss any need for improvements in your concussion policy or action plan with appropriate health care professionals and school and league officials.

What Should I do If a Concussion Occurs?

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, implement your 4-step action plan:

1. Remove the athlete from play.

Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body.

******When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play******

2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for a concussion.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:

- Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head or body
- Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
- Any seizures immediately following the injury
- Number of previous concussions (*if any*)

3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them the fact sheet on concussions.

Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for a concussion.

4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for a concussion, says they are symptom-free and it's OK to return to play.

A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.

Return to Practice/Return to Play Procedures

	Stage	Functional Exercise	Objective
1.	No Activity	Complete physical & cognitive rest	Recovery
2.	Light Aerobic Exercise	Walking, swimming or stationary cycling keeping intensity <70% maximum predicted heart rate. No resistance training	Increase Heart Rate
3.	Sport-Specific Exercise	Running drills. No head impact activities	Add Movement
4.	Non-Contact Training Drills	Progression to more complex training drills, e.g. passing drills in football. May start progressive resistance training	Exercise, coordination, and cognitive load
5.	Full Contact Practice	Following <u>written medical clearance</u> , participate in normal training activities	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6.	Normal Game Play		