

- SPORT - RELATED -

# CONCUSSION

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## A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS

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### WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

Of the approximately 44 million student-athletes in the United States who annually compete in organized sports, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that between 1.6 and 3.8 million concussions occur in sports and recreational activities each year, although recent studies suggest the incidence may be significantly higher. **A concussion is a brain injury** which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function and can be caused by any, but not limited to, the following:

- A blow to the head or body from contact with another player, hitting a hard surface such as the ground or court, or by being hit by a piece of equipment such as a bat or ball
- A “whiplash” effect after a blow to the body that results in a violent shaking of the head from front to back, side to side, or even a rotational force such as a facemask being grabbed and the neck being forcefully twisted

A concussion can happen during practice or competition in ANY sport. A concussion is not a structural injury (i.e., skull fracture), but can better be described as a metabolic dysfunction that leaves the brain in a very vulnerable state and can change the way your brain normally works. This metabolic dysfunction can cause a myriad of symptoms that may not present themselves until hours or even days after the injury and typically presents differently for each student-athlete. Thus, each injury should be managed individually. A concussion can happen even if your child does not lose consciousness.

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

You can’t “see” a concussion, but you might notice some of the symptoms right away. Other symptoms can show up hours or days after the injury and can sometimes last for weeks, months, or even longer in some cases. Concussion may cause one or multiple symptoms that can interfere with athletics, school, work, and social life. Concussions occur most frequently in football, but men’s/women’s soccer, men’s/women’s basketball, volleyball, and wrestling follow closely behind. All student-athletes are at risk. Concussion signs and symptoms include but are not limited to the following:

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| ✓ <i>Appears dazed or stunned</i>                 | ✓ <i>Headache or “pressure” in head</i>                 |
| ✓ <i>Is confused about assignment or position</i> | ✓ <i>Nausea or vomiting</i>                             |
| ✓ <i>Forgets plays</i>                            | ✓ <i>Balance problems or dizziness</i>                  |
| ✓ <i>Is unsure of game, score or opponent</i>     | ✓ <i>Double or blurry vision</i>                        |
| ✓ <i>Moves clumsily</i>                           | ✓ <i>Sensitivity to light and/or noise</i>              |
| ✓ <i>Answers questions slowly</i>                 | ✓ <i>Having trouble sleeping too much or too little</i> |
| ✓ <i>Loses consciousness (even briefly)</i>       | ✓ <i>Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy</i>        |
| ✓ <i>Shows behavior or personality changes</i>    | ✓ <i>Concentration or memory problems</i>               |
| ✓ <i>Can’t recall events before hit or fall</i>   | ✓ <i>Confusion</i>                                      |
| ✓ <i>Can’t recall events after hit or fall</i>    | ✓ <i>Does not “feel right”</i>                          |

→{More Information on Back} →

***“When in doubt, sit them out!”***

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*Concussion Solutions is the exclusive provider of a Health Management System that establishes the highest standard of care for safe return to activity by coordinating communication between the coach, parent, student athlete, school administration, and local medical experts that utilize industry leading tools in the diagnosis and treatment of sports related concussion.*

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## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK MY CHILD HAS SUSTAINED A CONCUSSION?

If your child is suspected of having a concussion, he or she must be immediately removed from practice or competition. Do not allow your child to just “*shake it off*” from hits that may cause his or her “*bell*” to be “*rung*”. Even a “*ding*” should NOT be minimized when dealing with youth concussion. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can exacerbate concussion symptoms, increase the risk for further injury, and even result in death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to “diagnose” a concussion, as that is the job of a qualified medical health care provider. However, you must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if you are suspicious or concerned then your child must stop playing immediately.

Following a concussion your child may experience some difficulty in school. Often they can have difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, or organization. Accommodations may have to be made on a case by case basis through the schools certified athletic trainer and appropriate administration.

## WHEN CAN AN ATHLETE RETURN TO PLAY FOLLOWING A CONCUSSION?

After suffering a concussion, your child **SHOULD NOT** return to play or practice on that same day. Concerns over student-athletes returning to play too quickly have led Louisiana state lawmakers to pass the “Louisiana Youth Concussion Act” (ACT 314) which states that no student-athlete shall return to play following a concussion on that same day and that the student-athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health care provider that is properly trained in the evaluation, treatment, and management of sport-related concussion before he or she is allowed to return to play in games or practices. The schools certified athletic trainer can properly manage the injury under the direct supervision of the trained physician. The law also mandates that coaches, officials, parents, and student-athletes receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once your child no longer has symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by an appropriate health care provider with appropriate training in the evaluation, treatment, and management of sports related concussion he or she should proceed with activity in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion. If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and under supervised instruction return to the previous days step.

## WHAT CAN I DO AS A PARENT?

Both you and your child should learn to recognize the “signs and symptoms” of concussion as listed above. You should know your child better than anyone else and be able to tell when “something just isn’t right”. Also, instruct your child to tell the schools certified athletic trainer or coach if he or she experiences such symptoms. Be mindful to monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance. Any questions or concerns should be directed to your respective schools certified athletic trainer for appropriate education on this injury.

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [www.concussion-solutions.com](http://www.concussion-solutions.com)
  - Follow us on Facebook [www.facebook.com/ConcussionSolutions](http://www.facebook.com/ConcussionSolutions)
  - Follow us on Twitter @CSolutionsLLC
- [www.momsteam.com](http://www.momsteam.com) *The Trusted Source for Sports Parents*
- <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports> *The Center for Disease Control and Prevention*



(Please fill out, detach, and return to athletic director/head coach)

Statement Acknowledging Receipt of Education and Responsibility to report signs or symptoms of concussion to be included as part of the “LHSAA Athletic Participation/Parental Permission” form. *By signing this form you are also acknowledging that the below information applies to ALL SPORTS that your son/daughter participates in during the academic year.*

I, \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ High School hereby acknowledge having received education about the signs, symptoms, and risk of sport related concussion. I also acknowledge my responsibility to report to my coaches, athletic trainer/school medical staff, parent(s)/legal guardian(s) any signs or symptoms of a concussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student-Athlete

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

I, \_\_\_\_\_, the parent/legal guardian of the student-athlete named above, hereby acknowledge having received education about the signs, symptoms, and risk of sport-related concussion.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Legal Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date