



# HOCKEY CANADA

## INFORMATION BULLETIN D'INFORMATION

Bulletin No.: I1010

<b>To:</b>	Officers	Minor Council Rep (10/12)
	Branch Presidents	Junior Council Rep (10/14)
	Branch Executive Directors	Senior Council Rep (10/12)
	Council Representatives	Female Council Rep (10/14)
	Directors	HDC Rep (10/13))
	Life Members	Hockey Canada Staff

Date: December 2, 2009

File:

From: Todd Jackson - Senior Manager, Safety and Insurance

**SUBJECT: OHF Concussion Position Paper**

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Please find attached the OHF Concussion Position paper presented to the Hockey Canada Board of Directors at the Semi Annual Meetings.

As directed this paper will be inserted into the Hockey Canada policy manual and we recommend the information as a key resource for Branches in addressing concussion injuries within the game.

Hockey Canada thanks the OHF for the initial submission of this document and a thank you to the Hockey Canada Safety Program Committee for their input into the document.

Sincerely,

Todd Jackson  
Senior Manager, Safety and Insurance  
Hockey Canada

**OHF POSITION PAPER**  
**CONCUSSIONS**  
**REVISED 2009-10-22**

The OHF Minor Council believes that the safety and health of minor hockey players is of paramount importance.

**When an individual has suffered a suspected concussion, the following steps must be taken:**

1. Any minor hockey player who suffers a suspected concussion must stop participation in the hockey activity immediately. If there is doubt as to whether a concussion has occurred, it is to be assumed that it has and that the player's parent guardian be encouraged to have the injury properly diagnosed by a medical doctor as soon as possible. A hockey activity is defined as any on-ice or off-ice function involving physical activity.
2. Team officials should recommend to the individual's parent or guardian that they seek medical attention immediately, especially if the concussion occurred in any form of hockey activity.
3. When a player is diagnosed by a medical doctor as having a concussion, the individual must stop participation in all hockey activities immediately.
4. The participant is not permitted to return to any hockey activity until written permission is given by a medical doctor. A sample of a return to play form can be found in the Hockey Canada Safety Program Participants Manual\*\*.

\*\* Note - Return to full participation shall follow the adopted Hockey Canada Safety Program return to play guidelines outlined below.

5. A copy of such documentation MUST be submitted to the governing body and/or the Team Safety Person or trainer as determined in the Branch policy, prior to the participants return to any hockey activity.
6. All Branches encourage the prevention of concussions with strong education programs. This includes:
  - The reduction of violence and fighting in the game through education and rule enforcement.

- The reduction of head checking and hitting from behind through education and rule enforcement.
- Ensuring that strong policies and preventions are put in place with respect to coaches and volunteers participating in on ice activities including the wearing of CSA certified helmets.

### **Rationale & Recommendation**

- A. To encourage greater overall awareness and responsibility regarding the importance of safety of all players, especially as it relates to head injuries.
  - B. To reduce the potential for litigation resulting from a concussed player being permitted to return to participation without proper clearance by a medical doctor.
  - C. To place a greater degree of responsibility on the parent/guardian to ensure that the players health is of paramount importance.
  - D. Each division may determine an applicable penalty for any club/team who knowingly disregards their responsibility of requiring a medical doctor's written permission for permitting a player to return to play once it has been determined that the player has received a concussion.
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### **RECOMMENDED IMPLEMENTATION BASED ON REVIEW AND FEEDBACK**

This policy should be highly recommended for implementation to all Hockey Canada Branches. It would be the decision of the Branch as to enforcement and sanctioning of this policy. The following challenges have been identified with respect to mandatory enforcement. If a Branch moves to mandatory enforcement these challenges will need to be addressed:

- a) Experience with doctor's notes being submitted to the governing body has shown it difficult to educate parents and volunteers with respect to this requirement. Communication of this mandatory requirement must be made a priority if this is implemented as a mandatory requirement for return to play.
- b) That Hockey Canada work with professional medical associations to educate physicians on the policy above so they are aware of the current return to play guidelines as well as the policy within their hockey district.

### RECOMMENDED RETURN TO PLAY FRAMEWORK

The return to play process is gradual, and begins after a doctor has given the player clearance to return to activity.

Doctor's clearance must be submitted to your governing hockey body or the Team Trainer/Safety Person as per Branch policy.

- Step 1:** No activity, only complete rest. Proceed to step 2 only when symptoms are gone.
- Step 2:** Light aerobic exercise, such as walking or stationary cycling. Monitor for symptoms and signs. No resistance training or weight lifting.
- Step 3:** Sport specific activities and training (e.g. skating).
- Step 4:** Drills without body contact. May add light resistance training and progress to heavier weights. The time needed to progress from non-contact to contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and the player. Go to step 5 after medical clearance (reassessment and note **to be submitted to your team's staff or your governing body as per Branch policy**).
- Step 5:** Begin drills with body contact.
- Step 6:** Game play.

Each step should take at least one day

**If symptoms or signs return, the player should return to the previous step, and be re-evaluated by a physician.**

Further information regarding concussions in hockey, their presentation, management, and prevention can be found on the Hockey Canada website at [www.hockeycanada.ca](http://www.hockeycanada.ca)