



Hamilton Croatia S.C. (since 1957)

Concussion Return to Play Protocol

<u>Policy Type</u>	<u>Author</u>	<u>Approved By</u>	<u>Approval Date</u>
Technical/Administrative	F. Ljubanovich	HCSC Board of Directors	March 1, 2022



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What is a concussion?

A concussion is a neurologic injury that causes a temporary disturbance in brain cells. It is the result of extreme acceleration or deceleration of the brain within the skull. The common misconception is that you must be hit in the head to cause a concussion injury – this is not true! Because a concussion is the result of acceleration or deceleration of the brain, a concussion can happen with a significant blow to anywhere on the body, provided sufficient acceleration/deceleration is transmitted to the brain tissue, head or face. There may be no other visible signs of a brain injury. It can cause changes in the brain that may not be seen in a CT scan or X-Ray. Balance, reaction time and cognitive skills can also be impacted.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Symptoms of a concussion range from mild to severe and can last for or appear within hours, days, weeks, or even months. In some cases, there may be no symptoms at all. If you suspect a concussion or notice any of the symptoms listed below, contact your doctor immediately. In severe cases, proceed to an Urgent Care Centre or Emergency Room immediately.

Visible Symptoms:

• Loss of consciousness or responsiveness	• Loss of motion/slow to rise
• Unsteady on feet/balance issues	• Grabbing/Clutching the head
• Dazed, vacant or blank look	• Vomiting
• Disoriented	• Bleeding from the nose/ears
• Sensitive to light	• Unequal pupils (eye)
• Seizures or convulsions	• Deteriorating conscious state

Non-Visible Symptoms

• Confusion/disorientation	• Complaints of pain/headache
• Complaints of dizziness/nausea	• Complaints of fuzzy/blurred vision
• Inability to concentrate	• Easily upset/angered (emotional)
• Nervous/Anxious	• Complaints of tingling/burning feeling in arms & legs
• Tired/sleeping more or less than usual	• Memory loss-unable to remember events leading up to the incident
• Trouble falling asleep	• Deteriorating conscious state



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****Please note that complaints of neck pain should be addressed immediately as a head injury may also result in a neck / spinal injury****

HCSC Emergency Protocol – Suspected Player Concussion

A player showing any signs/symptoms as listed on the **Pocket Concussion Recognition Tool** or as listed in this document must be removed from play immediately. All Coaches/Trainers are required to be familiar with the use of this tool and follow the Club's protocol without question. The player is not to re-enter the game or practice: https://sirc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/10/crt5_pdf2.pdf

- In the event of a loss of consciousness call 911 for assistance immediately. Do not move the player unless necessary for safety reasons.
- Ensure that a member of the team staff stays with the player.
- Notify any family members immediately if they are present.
- The player must be evaluated by a physician before returning to play. Documentation from the physician is required. The average recovery period is 10 to 14 days but can sometimes be longer.
- A graduated **“Return to Play Process”** using Ontario Soccer's Return to Play policy that can be found at: https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/2cec-1895166/Return-to-Sport_Protocol_Tracking_-_Soccer_2019.pdf#_ga=2.29790207.110022128.1643121993-1567226926.1620322605
- Coaches must complete the required injury report and submit it to **HCSC** within 24 hours of the incident, see HCSA website for download.



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	EXERCISE ALLOWED	% MAX HEART RATE	DURATION	OBJECTIVE
REST AND RECOVER	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » None » "Rest the body, Rest the brain" 	No training	Until symptoms clear	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Recovery » Symptom free
STAGE 1 LIGHT EXERCISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Walking, light jogging, swimming, stationary cycling or equivalent » No football, resistance training, weight lifting, jumping or hard running 	< 70%	< 15 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Increase heart rate
STAGE 2 SOCCER-SPECIFIC EXERCISE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Simple movement activities ie. running drills » Limit body and head movement » NO head impact activities » NO heading 	< 80%	< 45 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Add movement
STAGE 3 NON-CONTACT TRAINING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Progression to more complex training activities with increased intensity, » coordination and attention e.g. passing, change of direction, shooting, small-sided game » May start resistance training » NO head impact activities including NO heading » goalkeeping activities should avoid diving and any risk of the head being hit by a ball 	< 90%	< 60 min	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Exercise, coordination and skills/tactics
STAGE 4 FULL CONTACT PRACTICE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Normal training activities ie tackling, heading diving saves 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
STAGE 5 GAME PLAY	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Player rehabilitated 			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Return to game play

Ontario Soccer 4 Stage Remove from Sport Protocol

A suspected concussion has been identified and the player is removed from play. Head Coaches hold the final decision to remove players with a suspected concussion, can be found here:

https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/787f-1895165/Remove-from-Sport_Protocol_Summary_-_Soccer_2019.pdf#_ga=2.214299668.2090528831.1647219489-334875778.1647022291

Ontario Soccer Suspected Concussion report

A suspected concussion must be filled out when a coach suspects a player has suffered a concussion & the player is removed from play. Head Coaches hold the final decision to remove players with a suspected concussion, can be found here:

https://cdn3.sportngin.com/attachments/document/f9af-1895168/Suspected_Concussion_Report_Form_-_Soccer_2019.pdf#_ga=2.171302051.2090528831.1647219489-334875778.1647022291

Ontario Soccer Return to Play 6 Stages Protocol

This is a multi-part process that requires supervision from the player's health care provider at each stage. Ontario Soccer's 6 stage Return to Play protocol can be found by clicking here:

https://cdn2.sportngin.com/attachments/document/2cec-1895166/Return-to-Sport_Protocol_Tracking_-_Soccer_2019.pdf#_ga=2.29790207.110022128.1643121993-1567226926.1620322605



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Concussion Return to Play Protocol

6 Stage Protocol

1) Limit activity	➤ Physical & cognitive rest
2) Light aerobic exercise	➤ Walking, swimming, cycling
3) Sport-specific exercise	➤ Light running skills, no heading
4) Non-contact training drills	➤ Passing/Movement
6) Full contact practice	➤ Normal training cycle
7) Return to Play	➤ Normal Game Play

****A minimum of 24 hours is required between each stage.****

Any recurrence of symptoms requires the player to return to the previous level. HCSC Coaches, Assistant Coaches, Managers and Trainers are not authorized to oversee Return to Play processes.

Base Line Testing

Many soccer clubs recommend that players involved in competitive programs undergo Base Line Testing before the beginning of the outdoor season. This should be done in a controlled environment under the supervision of an approved concussion testing facility.

Caution

HCSC is committed to providing a safe environment for all players regardless of age and gender. It is, however, the responsibility of the parent to ensure that appropriate professional care is provided to players under the age of 18 in the event of injury. In the event of a concussion diagnosis, premature return to play can result in serious and sometimes permanent injury, particularly in the event of a second impact. Parents should seek ongoing medical evaluation for the benefit of the player's long-term health and safety and find an approved concussion testing facility.

More Information can be found at the following:

<https://www.ontariosoccer.net/concussion-resources>

If you suspect an athlete or your child suffered a concussion, contact your health care provider or:

<https://hollandbloorview.ca/services/programs-services/concussion-centre/concussion-services/clinical-services>

Revision History

Rev. #	Date	Revisor	Comments
.001	March 1, 2022	F. Ljubanovich	New Document