

# Softball Nova Scotia Concussion Policy

## Purpose

1. This policy is to govern Concussion Procedure in the sport of Softball. A concussion should be suspected in any athlete who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body and reports symptoms or demonstrates visual signs of a concussion.

2. A concussion should also be suspected if an athlete reports concussion symptoms to one of their peers, parents, teachers, or coaches or if anyone witnesses an athlete exhibiting of the visual signs of concussion. Some athletes will develop symptoms immediately while others will develop delayed symptoms (beginning 24-48 hours after the injury)

## 3. Recognition

A concussion:

- Is a traumatic brain injury that causes changes in how the brain functions, leading to signs and symptoms that can emerge immediately or over the course of 24-72 hours.
- May be caused either by a direct blow to the head, face or neck, or elsewhere on the body with an impulsive force transmitted to the head.
- Can occur even if there has been no loss of consciousness (in fact most concussions occur without the loss of consciousness)
- Cannot normally be seen on X-rays, standard CT scans or MRI's and
- Is typically expected in symptoms lasting up to 4 weeks in children (18 years or under), and in some cases, symptoms are prolonged

4. It is important that athletes with a suspected concussion undergo medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible. It is also important that athletes with a suspected concussion receive written medical clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to sport activities.

## Prevention

5. Concussion prevention, recognition and management require athletes to follow the rules and regulations of their sport, respect their opponents, avoid head contact, and report suspected concussions.

- limiting head and body contact
- Athletes must wear official safety helmets per Softball Canada rule book, official field, equipment (safety bases),
- pre-competition or game play Officials are responsible to inspect all safety equipment including helmets to ensure they meet the correct safety standards good condition and have

not been altered, athletes must ensure helmets are correct fit, and replacing according to manufacturer's instructions

Observation:

- Signs or symptoms of concussion identified by Coach, Manager, Trainer, Parent, Spectator, Executive, Official
- Peer-report signs and concussion symptoms of an Athlete/Player,

Removal from Game

6.If a suspected concussion occurs, it is the responsibility of team Coach, Manager, officials, trainer, parent, or executive, to remove the participant from participating in softball activity immediately. When present, a doctor, or nurse practitioner holds the final decision to remove participants with a suspected concussion. The medical professional should be identified prior to the decision.

Return to Play

7.If a medical professional determines that the Participant with a suspected concussion does not have a concussion:

- A medical professional: If a participant has been deemed to have a suspected concussion, it is the Parent/Guardian responsibility to take the participant to hospital/emerge immediately.
- Obtaining appropriate diagnosis and documentation: Written documentation must be obtained from one of the medical professionals if a concussion has occurred

8.An athlete can return to play if parent/guardian must provide the original written documentation from the medical professional highlighting that the Participant did not or no longer have a concussion and this documentation must be provided to the Softball Nova Scotia. Documentation from any other source will not be accepted.

Concussion Symptoms

Headache	Dizziness	Visual problems
Feeling mentally foggy	Difficulty concentrating	Drowsiness
Sensitive to light	Irritability	Nervous/anxious
Nausea	Vomiting	Balance problems
Feeling slowed down	Difficulty remembering	Sleeping more/less than usual
Sensitive to noise	Sadness	Numbness/tingling

Red Flag Symptoms: Call 911 immediately with a sudden onset of any of these symptoms

Headache that worsens	Can't recognize people or places
Seizures or convulsions	Increasing confusion or irritability
Repeated Vomiting	Weakness or numbness in arms/legs
Loss of consciousness	Persistent or increasing neck pain
Looks very drowsy/can't be awakened	Unusual behavioural change
Slurred speech	Focal neurologic signs (e.g., paralysis, weakness, etc.