

KNOW THE FACTS

- >> Concussion symptoms can appear anytime, up to 48-72 hours after impact.
- >> The most common cause of concussion in soccer is player-to-player contact while trying to head the ball.
- >> You do NOT have to lose consciousness to sustain a concussion.
- >> Athletes who have had a concussion may have a higher chance of sustaining a another concussion.
- >> Younger athletes can be at higher risk of concussion and can take longer to recover.



It's important to recognize possible concussion events as they happen.
When in doubt, sit them out!

MEDICAL NOTE

If you think a player has received a concussion, it is important to make an appointment with a doctor.



It's also important to watch for **RED FLAG SYMPTOMS** that may appear in the first 24-72 hours. These symptoms may suggest a more serious injury.

If you notice any **RED FLAG SYMPTOMS**,
CALL 911 OR GET MEDICAL CARE IMMEDIATELY!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn how to recognize a concussion and what to do when one occurs.

POCKET CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL

<http://bjism.bmj.com/content/47/5/267.full.pdf>

CONCUSSION AWARENESS TRAINING TOOL

for Parents, Players and Coaches

<http://www.cattonline.com>

PARACHUTE'S SMART SOCCER RESOURCE

<http://www.parachutecanada.org/injury-topics/topic/C28>

ACUTE SPORTS CONCUSSION CLINIC

<http://www.sportmed.ucalgary.ca/node/250>



CONCUSSIONS IN SOCCER

Know the Facts. Stay Safe.



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KNOWLEDGE. LEADERSHIP. ACTION.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a **brain injury** that happens when there is a force to the head or body that causes changes to brain function.



It's estimated that in a 3-month soccer season, 1 in every 5 teams will have a player that gets a concussion.

RECOGNIZE & REMOVE

The key to managing concussions is to reduce the chance of making the injury worse or having delayed recovery. To do this, you need to **RECOGNIZE** the concussion might have happened and **REMOVE** the player. Encouraging athletes to report the injury to their coaches, parents and doctor is vital to identifying suspected concussions.

In order to prevent concussions from happening in the first place, it's important that players are aware of where they are on the field at all times, follow the rules and that they respect their opponents.

Symptoms of a concussion will be different for each player.

If any player shows **RED FLAG SYMPTOMS**, they should get medical help right away.

RED FLAG SYMPTOMS

Athlete complains of neck pain	Deteriorating conscious state
Increasing confusion or irritability	Severe or increasing headache
Repeated vomiting	Unusual behaviour change
Seizures	Double vision
Weakness or tingling in arms or legs	



REMEMBER:

Sleep and rest are important for initial recovery!

KNOW THE SYMPTOMS

A concussion should be suspected if any of the following symptoms occur after direct or indirect contact to the head.



PHYSICAL SYMPTOMS

Headache	Ringed Ears	Sensitivity to Light
Blurred Vision	Seeing 'Stars'	Sensitivity to Noise
Dizziness	Nausea	Neck Pain
Poor Balance	Vomiting	

COGNITIVE SYMPTOMS

Feeling 'Foggy'	Disorientation	Slowed Speech
Feeling 'Slowed'	Poor Concentration	Easily Confused
Poor Memory	Easily Distracted	

EMOTIONAL SYMPTOMS

Personality change	Irritability
Nervous/Anxious	Sadness
More Moody	Unmotivated

SLEEP & ENERGY SYMPTOMS

Fatigue	Drowsiness
Excessive Sleep	Sleeping Less
Trouble Falling Asleep	

A concussion can affect an athlete's performance at school and make it difficult to concentrate. Teachers should be notified if a player has a concussion so that accommodations can be made.

RETURN TO SCHOOL & PLAY

Returning to soccer following a concussion is a "stepwise" process that requires patience and caution. Follow the **Graduated Return To Play Protocol** to help reduce the risk of re-injuring your brain and body.

Returning to play too soon can result in longer recovery time and a higher risk of re-injury.

Return to Learn Protocol

REST AND GRADUAL RETURN TO SCHOOL: Gradual return to school as tolerated is recommended and must occur **BEFORE** return to play.

STEP Graduated Return to Play Protocol

1

REST: Restrict both cognitive (school-related) and physical activity to allow recovery.

2

LIGHT AEROBIC EXERCISE: Walking or cycling <70% max heart rate. No resistance training.

3

SPORT SPECIFIC EXERCISE: Running drills in soccer. No head-impact activities.

4

NON-CONTACT PRACTICE: Progress to more complex training drills and may start progressive resistance training.

Medical Clearance for Contact

5

FULL CONTACT PRACTICE: Following medical clearance, player may participate fully in practice.

6

RETURN TO PLAY: Return to normal game play.



NOTE:

An athlete should only progress to the next step after 24 hours if no symptoms re-emerge. If symptoms persist for longer than 3 or 4 weeks seek a referral to a concussion specialist.