

CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN GUIDE

Having a Concussion Action Plan will ensure that all those involved with your water polo team know what to do and what their role is when a concussion is suspected in a practice or in a game. The Concussion Action Plan will serve as a step-by-step guide to help your team respond to concussions properly. To make sure concussions are managed safely and effectively, implement an action plan that coaches, trainers, players and their parents/caregivers are all involved in.

Steps to create a Concussion Action Plan:

1. **Identify safety personnel** who can assist with managing the health of the team and are knowledgeable about concussions, know the action plan and know what to do when a concussion is suspected. This might include a team trainer, athletic therapist, doctor, designated person certified in first aid or another person responsible for ensuring the concussion protocol is followed.

**Note: In Ontario, Rowan's Law protocol requires that there is a designated individual responsible for ensuring that concussion protocol is followed.*

2. **Provide players and families with concussion resources** so everyone knows what to look for to keep players safe.

3. **Always have a Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT)** at practices and games so that you have a list of concussion signs and symptoms available, and information on the first steps to take when a concussion is suspected.

4. **Use the sample practice and game action plan templates** at the end of this document to create a Concussion Action Plan for your water polo team.

If you suspect a concussion has occurred:

1. Coach or trainer immediately removes the player from the practice or training session.
2. Coach or trainer ensures the player is not left alone. Monitor signs and symptoms using the Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT) and **DO NOT** administer any medication. The player must not return to practice or training that day.
3. Coach informs the player's parent/caregiver or emergency contact about the suspected concussion and provides them with all relevant concussion resources and links.
4. Parent/caregiver or emergency contact ensures the player is evaluated by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible.
5. Coaches, trainers and parents/caregiver share the responsibility to communicate with the player to ensure that if they are diagnosed with a concussion, they are following Water Polo Canada's, the province's, and the National Championship League (NCL)'s concussion protocol and policies and a medically-supervised Water Polo Return-to-Sport strategy. **Players may only return to full practice and gameplay when they have been cleared by their doctor.**

If you notice any "red flag" symptoms:



"Red flag" symptoms can be signs of a more serious injury.

Get medical help immediately if you notice that a player has any of the following symptoms:

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Vomiting more than once
- Growing confusion
- Seizures or convulsions
- Weakness or tingling in their arms or legs
- Increasingly restless, agitated or combative behaviour
- Double vision
- Severe or increasing headache
- Deteriorating conscious state or loss of consciousness
- If there is loss of consciousness, initiate the Emergency Action Plan and call an ambulance.

If the player is unconscious or you suspect a neck injury, continue to monitor airway, breathing and circulation (ABCs). Do not attempt to remove any equipment. In this situation, monitoring the athlete's ABCs can be completed by a lifeguard.

SAMPLE CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN FOR PRACTICES OR TRAINING SESSIONS

Team Name: _____ Trainer: _____

Coach: _____ Safety Personnel: _____

Start your water polo season by setting your team up for a safe, healthy and successful season. Fill in the below table to create your team’s Concussion Action Plan for Practices and/or Training Sessions.

Be aware of “red flag” symptoms, which can be signs of a more serious injury. If any are present, initiate the Emergency Action Plan. If a player is unconscious or a neck injury is suspected, do not attempt to move the player or remove equipment unless there is a concern for their breathing and/or you are appropriately trained to do so.

If you suspect a concussion has occurred:

ACTION	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE (NAME, TITLE)	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER	STATUS
Coach removes the player from the practice or training session.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Coach ensures the player is not left alone. Monitor signs and symptoms using the <u>CRT6</u> and DO NOT administer any medication. The player must not return to practice, training or other physical activity that day.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Coach informs the player’s parent/caregiver or emergency contact about the suspected concussion and provides them with all relevant <u>WPC</u> and <u>Parachute</u> concussion resources and links.			<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTION	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE (NAME, TITLE)	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER	STATUS
<p>Parent/caregiver ensures the player is assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Coaches, trainers and parents share the responsibility to communicate with the player to ensure that if they are diagnosed with a concussion, they are following Water Polo Canada's, the province's, and the National Championship League (NCL)'s concussion protocol and policies and a medically supervised <u>Water Polo Return-to-Sport strategy</u>. Players may only return to full practice and game play when they have been cleared by their doctor.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>

SAMPLE CONCUSSION ACTION PLAN FOR GAMES

Team Name: _____ Trainer: _____

Coach: _____ Safety Personnel: _____

Start your water polo season by setting your team up for a safe, healthy and successful season. Fill in the below table to create your team’s Concussion Action Plan for Games.

Be aware of “red flag” symptoms, which can be signs of a more serious injury. If any are present, initiate the Emergency Action Plan. If a player is unconscious or a neck injury is suspected, do not attempt to move the player or remove equipment unless there is a concern for their breathing and/or you are appropriately trained to do so.

If you suspect a concussion has occurred:

ACTION	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE (NAME, TITLE)	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER	STATUS
Official stops the game when an injury is suspected.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Coach removes the player from the game.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Coach ensures the player is not left alone. Monitor signs and symptoms using the <u>CRT6</u> and DO NOT administer any medication. The player must not return to the gameplay that day.			<input type="checkbox"/>
Coach informs the player’s parent/caregiver or emergency contact about the suspected concussion and provides them with all relevant <u>WPC</u> and <u>Parachute</u> concussion resources and links.			<input type="checkbox"/>

ACTION	PERSONNEL RESPONSIBLE (NAME, TITLE)	EMERGENCY CONTACT NUMBER	STATUS
<p>Parent/caregiver, chaperone, team manager or coach ensures the player is assessed by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner as soon as possible.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Coaches, trainers and parents share the responsibility to communicate with the player to ensure that if they are diagnosed with a concussion, they are following Water Polo Canada's, the province's, and the National Championship League (NCL)'s concussion protocol and policies and a medically supervised <u>Water Polo Return-to-Sport strategy</u>. Players may only return to full practice and game play when they have been cleared by their doctor.</p>			<input type="checkbox"/>