

## **Concussion Information - When in Doubt, Sit Them Out!**

1. Before a student may participate in practice or competition: At the beginning of a season for a youth athletic activity, the person operating the youth athletic activity shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to each person who will be coaching that youth athletic activity and to each person who wishes to participate in that youth athletic activity. No person may participate in a youth athletic activity unless the person returns the information sheet signed by the person and, if he or she is under the age of 19, by his or her parent or guardian.
2. An athletic coach, or official involved in a youth athletic activity, or health care provider shall remove a person from the youth athletic activity if the coach, official, or health care provider determines that the person exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury or the coach, official, or health care provider suspects the person has sustained a concussion or head injury.
3. A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity may not participate in a youth athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.

| <b>These are some SIGNS concussion (what others can see in an injured athlete):</b>  | <b>These are some of the more common SYMPTOMS of concussion (what an injured athlete feels):</b>   |
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| Dazed or stunned appearance<br>Change in the level of consciousness or awareness<br>Confused about assignment<br>Forgets plays<br>Unsure of score, game, opponent<br>Clumsy<br>Answers more slowly than usual<br>Shows behavior changes<br>Loss of consciousness<br>Asks repetitive questions or memory concerns | Headache<br>Nausea<br>Dizzy or unsteady<br>Sensitive to light or noise<br>Feeling mentally foggy<br>Problems with concentration and memory<br>Confused<br>Slow |

Injured athletes can exhibit many or just a few of the signs and/or symptoms of concussion. However, if a player exhibits any signs or symptoms of concussion, the responsibility is simple: remove them from participation. "When in doubt sit them out."

It is important to notify a parent or guardian when an athlete is thought to have a concussion. Any athlete with a concussion must be seen by an appropriate health care provider before returning to practice (including weight lifting) or competition.

### **RETURN TO PLAY**

Current recommendations are for a stepwise return to play program. In order to resume activity, the athlete must be symptom free and off any pain control or headache medications. The athlete should be carrying a full academic load without any significant accommodations. Finally, the athlete must have clearance from an appropriate health care provider.

The program described below is a guideline for returning concussed athletes when they are symptom free. Athletes with multiple concussions and athletes with prolonged symptoms often require a very different return to activity program and should be managed by a physician that has experience in treating concussion.

The following program allows for one step per 24 hours. The program allows for a gradual increase in heart rate/physical exertion, coordination, and then allows contact. If symptoms return, the athlete should stop activity and notify their healthcare provider before progressing to the next level.

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STEP ONE: About 15 minutes of light exercise: stationary biking or jogging

STEP TWO: More strenuous running and sprinting in the gym or field without equipment

STEP THREE: Begin non-contact drills in full uniform. May also resume weight lifting

STEP FOUR: Full practice with contact

STEP FIVE: Full game clearance

**118.293 Concussion and head injury.**

(1) In this section:

(a) "Credential" means a license or certificate of certification issued by this state.

(b) "Health care provider" means a person to whom all of the following apply:

1. He or she holds a credential that authorizes the person to provide health care.

2. He or she is trained and has experience in evaluating and managing pediatric concussions and head injuries.

3. He or she is practicing within the scope of his or her credential.

(c) "Youth athletic activity" means an organized athletic activity in which the participants, a majority of whom are under 19 years of age, are engaged in an athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity, or in practice or preparation for an organized athletic game or competition against another team, club, or entity. "Youth athletic activity" does not include a college or university activity or an activity that is incidental to a nonathletic program.

(2) In consultation with the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association, the department shall develop guidelines and other information for the purpose of educating athletic coaches and pupil athletes and their parents or guardians about the nature and risk of concussion and head injury in youth athletic activities.

(3) At the beginning of a season for a youth athletic activity, the person operating the youth athletic activity shall distribute a concussion and head injury information sheet to each person who will be coaching that youth athletic activity and to each person who wishes to participate in that youth athletic activity. No person may participate in a youth athletic activity unless the person returns the information sheet signed by the person and, if he or she is under the age of 19, by his or her parent or guardian.

(4) (a) An athletic coach, or official involved in a youth athletic activity, or health care provider shall remove a person from the youth athletic activity if the coach, official, or health care provider determines that the person exhibits signs, symptoms, or behavior consistent with a concussion or head injury or the coach, official, or health care provider suspects the person has sustained a concussion or head injury.

(b) A person who has been removed from a youth athletic activity under par. (a) may not participate in a youth athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives a written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.

(5) (a) Any athletic coach, official involved in an athletic activity, or volunteer who fails to remove a person from a youth athletic activity under sub. (4) (a) is immune from civil liability for any injury resulting from that omission unless it constitutes gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

(b) Any volunteer who authorizes a person to participate in a youth athletic activity under sub. (4) (b) is immune from civil liability for any injury resulting from that act unless the act constitutes gross negligence or willful or wanton misconduct.

(6) This section does not create any liability for, or a cause of action against, any person.

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Possible Information Sheets:

Coaches: <http://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/ConcussionCoaches.pdf>

Parents: <http://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/ConcussionParents.pdf>

Parents: <http://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/NFHSParentGuide.pdf>

Athletes: <http://www.wiaawi.org/Portals/0/PDF/Health/ConcussionAthletes.pdf>

Order CDC materials: <http://www.cdc.gov/pubs/ncipc.aspx#tbi4>