

# ANDREWS INSTITUTE

## SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION

### WHAT IS A SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION?

A sport related concussion (SRC) is an injury that is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head – or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. An athlete may still have a concussion even if they did not lose consciousness. Concussion signs and symptoms can appear immediately or may not be noticed until days or even weeks after the injury. It is important to know the common signs and symptoms associated with a head injury as well as those that warrant immediate evaluation.

#### COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

- Headache
- Balance problems
- Blurry vision
- Dizziness
- Confusion
- Nausea
- Memory issues
- Sleep changes
- Amnesia
- Irritability
- Feeling foggy
- Vomiting
- Loss of consciousness
- Slowed reaction time
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Trouble concentrating

#### EMERGENT / RED FLAG SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

**If your child displays any of the symptoms below, you should take them to the emergency department.**

- Loss of / fluctuating level of consciousness
- Decreased level of consciousness
- Increasing confusion
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Worsening headache
- Inability to speak
- Repeated vomiting
- Increasing irritability
- Pupils becoming unequal
- Numbness in arms or legs
- Seizures
- Slurred or delayed speech

### FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

#### Can concussions be prevented?

Currently, there is no strong evidence to suggest that helmets, head gear, mouthpieces, or face guards help to prevent or minimize the risk of SRC, though protective equipment can reduce the risk of other injuries to the face or head.

#### When should my child be removed from play?

Athletes with the signs or symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves athletes at risk for greater injury, prolonged recovery or other serious brain injury. An athletic trainer (AT) is a healthcare professional that is trained in recognizing and managing concussions. If available, a sideline evaluation should be completed by an AT or physician.

#### Do CT Scans diagnose concussions?

SRC typically creates a functional disturbance rather than a structural injury. Therefore, the injury is not seen on imaging, such as a CT scan. CT scan may be ordered to rule out structural injuries, such as a brain bleed. A negative CT scan does not rule out a concussion.

#### When should my child see a physician?

If not evaluated by a physician at the time of injury, an evaluation should take place as soon as possible. The athlete should be evaluated by a physician trained in concussion management.

#### How long does it take to recover from a concussion?

Older adolescents and adults typically recover within a few weeks. Younger children often have a longer recovery time. Recovery rates vary by individual, but it is important that an athlete fully recover prior to returning to activity and should complete a graduated return-to-play progression.



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