

# KNOW YOUR CONCUSSION ABCs

Assess the situation    Be alert for signs and symptoms    Contact a health care provider



## Wisconsin Fact Sheet for Athletes

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur during practices or games in any sport or recreational activity.

### What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Unlike a broken arm, you can't see a concussion. Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. It is important to watch for changes in how you are feeling, if symptoms are getting worse, or if you just "don't feel right." If you think you or a teammate may have a concussion, it is important to tell someone.

### COMMON SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION:

**Tell someone if you see a teammate with any of these symptoms:**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets sports plays
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to the hit, bump, or fall
- Can't recall events after the hit, bump, or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes

**Tell someone if you feel any of the following:**

#### Thinking/Remembering:

- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Feeling more slowed down
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

#### Physical:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Fatigue or feeling tired
- Blurry or double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Numbness or tingling
- Does not "feel right"

#### Emotional:

- Irritable
- Sad
- More emotional than usual
- Nervous

Changes in your normal sleep patterns.

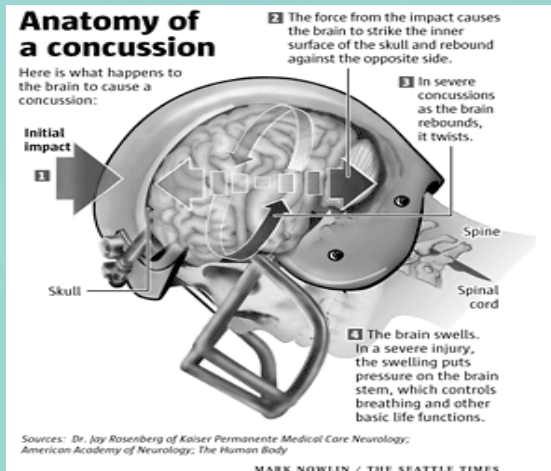


Materials adapted from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

\*Wear the proper equipment for each sport and make sure it fits well.

\*Follow the rules of the sport and the coach's rule for safety.

\*Use proper technique.



If you have a suspected concussion, you should NEVER return to sports or recreational activities on the same day the injury occurred. You should not return to activities until you are symptom-free and a health care provider experienced in managing concussion provides written clearance allowing return to activity. This means, until permitted, not returning to:

- Physical Education (PE) class,
- Sports conditioning, weight lifting, practices and games, or
- Physical activity at recess.

## What should you do if you think you have a concussion?

1. Tell your coaches and parents right away. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. If you experience symptoms of a concussion, you should immediately remove yourself from practice/play. Tell your coach right away if you think you or one of your teammates might have a concussion.
2. Get evaluated by a health care provider. A health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussion can determine if you have a concussion, help guide management and safe return to normal activities, including school (concentration and learning) and physical activity. If you have been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a suspected or confirmed concussion or head injury you may not participate again until evaluated by a health care provider and you receive written clearance to return to activity. You must provide this written clearance to your coach.
3. Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a repeat concussion. It is important to rest until you receive written clearance from a health care provider to return to practice and play.

## Why should you tell someone about your symptoms?

1. Your chances of sustaining a life altering injury are greatly increased if you aren't fully recovered from a concussion or head injury.
2. Practicing/playing with concussion symptoms can prolong your recovery.
3. Practicing/playing with a concussion can increase your chances of getting another concussion.
4. Telling someone could save your life or the life of a teammate!

## Tell your teachers

Tell your teachers if you have suffered a concussion or head injury. Concussions often impair school performance. In order to properly rest, many students often need to miss a few days of school immediately following a concussion. When you return to school after a concussion you may need to:

- Take rest breaks as needed,
- Spend fewer hours at school,
- Have more time allowed to take tests or complete assignments,
- Suspend your physical activity (PE class and/or recess)
- Suspend your extracurricular activities (band, choir, dance, etc)
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer.

To learn more about concussions, go to:

[www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion); [www.wiaawi.org](http://www.wiaawi.org); [www.nfhs.org](http://www.nfhs.org)



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## Wisconsin Fact Sheet for Parents

### What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head and can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump to the head can be serious.

Concussions can have a more serious effect on a young, developing brain and need to be addressed correctly.

### What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. It is important to watch for changes in how your child or teen is acting or feeling, if symptoms are getting worse, or if s/he just "doesn't feel right." Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

If your child or teen reports **one or more** of the symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. Children and teens are among those at greatest risk for concussion.

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION

### SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR GURADIANS

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about events
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to the hit, bump, or fall
- Can't recall events after the hit, bump, or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Forgets class schedule or assignments

### SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY YOUR CHILD

#### Thinking/Remembering:

- Difficulty thinking clearly
- Difficulty concentrating or remembering
- Feeling more slowed down
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

#### Physical:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Fatigue or feeling tired
- Blurry or double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Numbness or tingling
- Does not "feel right"

#### Emotional:

- Irritable
- Sad
- More emotional than usual
- Nervous

#### Sleep\*:

- Drowsy
- Sleeps less than usual
- Sleeps more than usual
- Has trouble falling asleep

\*Only ask about sleep symptoms if the injury occurred on a prior day.

Materials adapted from U.S. Dept of HHS Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF  
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION



# DANGER SIGNS

Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. Your child or teen should be seen in an emergency department right away if s/he has:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Difficult to arouse
- Severe headache or worsening headache
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

Children and teens with a suspected concussion should NEVER return to sports or recreation activities on the same day the injury occurred. They should delay returning to their activities until a health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussion says they are symptom-free and provide written clearance to return to activity. This means, until permitted, not returning to:

- Physical Education (PE) class,
- Sports conditioning, weight lifting, practices and games, or
- Physical activity at recess.

## What should I do if my child or teen has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussions can direct concussion management and review when it is safe for your child to return to normal activities, including school (concentration and learning) and physical activity. If your child or teen has been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a suspected or confirmed concussion or head injury, they may not participate again until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.
2. Help them take time to get better. If your child or teen has a concussion, her or his brain needs time to heal. Your child or teen should limit activities while he/she is recovering from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, using a computer, texting, or playing video games may worsen or prolong concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness). Rest will help your child recover more quickly. Your child may become upset that he/she cannot participate in activities.

3. Together with your child or teen, learn more about concussions. Talk about the potential long-term effects of concussion and the problems caused by returning too soon to daily activities to quickly (especially physical activity and learning/concentration).

## How can I help my child return to school safely after a concussion?

Help your child or teen get needed support when returning to school after a concussion. Talk with your child's school administrators, teachers, school nurse, coach, and counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms. Your child may feel frustrated, sad, and even angry because he/she cannot keep up with schoolwork and learn as well after a concussion. Your child may also feel isolated from peers and social networks. Talk often with your child about these issues and offer your support and encouragement. As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually. Children and teens who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- Take rest breaks as needed,
- Spend fewer hours at school,
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments,
- Receive help with schoolwork, and/or
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer.

To download this fact sheet in Spanish, please visit: [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion). Para obtener una copia electrónica de esta hoja de información en español, por favor visite: [www.cdc.gov/Concussion](http://www.cdc.gov/Concussion).

To learn more about concussions go to:

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# PARENT & ATHLETE AGREEMENT

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**As a Parent and as an Athlete it is important to recognize the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussions.** By signing this form you are stating that you understand the importance of recognizing and responding to the signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion or head injury.

## Parent Agreement:

I \_\_\_\_\_ have **read** the Parent Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused. I also understand the common signs, symptoms, and behaviors. I agree that my child must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected.

I understand that it is my responsibility to seek medical treatment if a suspected concussion is reported to me.

I understand that my child cannot return to practice/play until providing written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to his/her coach.

I understand the possible consequences of my child returning to practice/play too soon.

Parent/Guardian  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Athlete Agreement:

I \_\_\_\_\_ have **read** the Athlete Concussion and Head Injury Information and **understand** what a concussion is and how it may be caused.

I understand the importance of reporting a suspected concussion to my coaches and my parents/guardian.

I understand that I must be removed from practice/play if a concussion is suspected. I understand that I must provide written clearance from an appropriate health care provider to my coach before returning to practice/play.

I understand the possible consequence of returning to practice/play too soon and that my brain needs time to heal.

Athlete  
Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

# Questions and Contact Information

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ County \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Age \_\_\_\_\_ School \_\_\_\_\_ School District \_\_\_\_\_

Check all that apply  
I participate in:

- |  |  |  |  |
|--|--|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Football      | <input type="checkbox"/> Baseball/Softball | <input type="checkbox"/> Basketball        | <input type="checkbox"/> Hockey              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Soccer        | <input type="checkbox"/> Golf              | <input type="checkbox"/> Volleyball        | <input type="checkbox"/> Wrestling           |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Track & Field | <input type="checkbox"/> Cross Country     | <input type="checkbox"/> Cheerleading      | <input type="checkbox"/> Skiing/Snowboarding |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Gymnastics    | <input type="checkbox"/> Tennis            | <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming & Diving |  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____   |  |  |  |

Name of Current Team \_\_\_\_\_

1. Have you ever had a concussion? \_\_\_\_\_, if yes, how many? \_\_\_\_\_
2. Have you ever experienced concussion symptoms? \_\_\_\_\_ Did you report them? \_\_\_\_\_

**Emergency Contacts:**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Relationship: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_

Please complete this form and return to the person operating the youth athletic activity.