

Signs and symptoms of concussion

EMT _____

Date _____

There are many different symptoms reported by athletes who suffer concussions, and in some cases they may not be easily detected for hours or days after the injury. However, look for clues immediately and make sure athletes are re-evaluated every few minutes over several hours. At home, parents should watch for the following symptoms as well as complaints that lights are too bright, noises are too loud, or your child has difficulty concentrating while watching TV or playing video games. Any of the following are indicative of concussion:

Appears dazed or stunned

Headache or "pressure" in head

Is confused about assignment or position

Nausea or vomiting

Forgets an instruction

Balance problems or dizziness

Is unsure of game, score, or opponent

Double or blurry vision

Moves clumsily

Sensitivity to light

Answers questions slowly

Sensitivity to noise

Loses consciousness (even briefly)

Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy

Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes

Concentration or memory problems

Can't recall events prior to hit or fall

Confusion

Can't recall events after hit or fall

Does not "feel right" or is "feeling down"

What to do if a concussion is suspected...

Concussions can be difficult to diagnose, in part because **signs and symptoms** can be subtle. Sometimes an athlete will be unusually tired, or they "just don't seem like themselves" or are bothered by loud noises or bright lights. Other symptoms are more obvious, such as vomiting or the inability to answer questions. It's important to remember that a younger child may not be able to recognize and/or verbalize their symptoms, and to make it even more complicated, symptoms may not show up for hours or even days.

Remove an athlete from practice/play immediately

If a concussion is *suspected* - make sure the athlete is immediately removed from activity. **When in doubt, sit them out.** It is not uncommon for athletes to say they are "fine" immediately after an injury has occurred. Sometimes **signs and symptoms** don't appear right away but will show up minutes, hours, or days later. Anyone suspected of having suffered a concussion should not return to play without written medical authorization from a medical professional trained in the diagnosis and management of concussion. *In many states, this is now law.*

Contact Coaches and a parent/guardian

You should contact the player's Coaches and if possible, a parent or guardian immediately if an athlete is suspected of having sustained a concussion. Many times symptoms will appear minutes, hours, or even days after an injury. Parents should be educated about the signs and symptoms of the injury and know when to call 911. Most concussed athletes go home to parents who are ill-equipped to deal with a brain injury. Make sure to educate parents, athletes and all involved with youth athletes.