

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

Definition:

A head-trauma-induced alteration in mental status that may or may not involve a loss of consciousness.

***People who have lost consciousness have a concussion or worse!
A person does not need to lose consciousness to have a concussion!***

A concussion may be caused by a direct blow to the head, face, neck or anywhere else on the body that causes a severe and sudden movement to the head.

COMMON SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Symptoms are often subtle

- headache
- pressure in head
- neck pain
- dizziness
- balance problems
- nausea and vomiting
- vision problems
- hearing problems/ringing
- “don’t feel right”
- feeling “dinged” or “dazed”
- confusion
- feeling slowed down
- feeling like in “a fog”
- drowsiness
- fatigue or low energy
- more emotional than usual
- irritability
- difficulty concentrating
- difficulty remembering

PREVENTION - Reduce the risk of brain injury:

1. Appropriate protective equipment should be worn properly and replaced when damaged. Approved helmets should be used in all activities with a risk of head trauma.
2. Adhere to the rules of the sport or activity. Play fair and play smart!
3. Respect all participants.

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Capital Health

IWK Department of Pediatrics



www.thinkfirst.ca



A Helping Hand to a New Beginning

BIANS

Brain Injury Association of Nova Scotia

bians1@ns.sympatico.ca

phone: 902 473-7301

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES

Returning to an activity while still symptomatic is very dangerous.

When in doubt, sit them out!

Anyone suspected of having a concussion must be removed from the current activity, game or practice and seek medical evaluation.

What can I expect?

Concussion typically results in a fast onset of short term difficulties that resolve over time. You will need to rest until your concussion symptoms are gone. This means resting your body and mind until you have no symptoms of headache, fatigue, etc. Then your DOCTOR will advise that you go through a gradual increase in exercise and activity (listed below) before returning to your normal physical and mental activities.

Step 0	Complete physical rest - no exercise or exertion. Limit mental activities i.e. reading, TV, computers, video games. If these mental activities make your symptoms worse, stop immediately. No alcohol or drugs until you are symptom free.
	Proceed to the next step ONLY if symptom free. If symptoms occur, drop back to the step where you do not have symptoms, then try to progress again. Allow AT LEAST 24 hours between steps.
Step 1	Light exercise/work such as walking or stationary cycling, reading.
Step 2	Sport/work specific activity such as skating for hockey, computer use for work.
Step 3	Sport practice - no contact/work for short intervals.
Step 4	Sport practice with body contact/work - once cleared to do so by a MEDICAL DOCTOR. The time required to progress will vary with the severity of the concussion.
Step 5	Return to full activity - sport/work/school.

SECOND IMPACT SYNDROME

Even a seemingly mild blow to the head when post-concussion symptoms are still present can lead to significant problems. It has also been shown that multiple concussions can lead to irreversible changes such as memory loss and concentration problems.

Signs to watch for:

Problems could arise over the first 24-48 hours.

You should not be left alone and must go to a hospital at once if you have:

- a headache that gets worse
- drowsiness and can't be woken up
- inability to recognize people or places
- repeated vomiting
- unusual behavior or confusion
- signs of being very irritable
- a seizure
- weak or numb arms or legs
- unsteadiness on your feet
- slurred speech