

CONCUSSION IN SPORT

“A Blow to the Head; it’s not always a Knock-Out!”

At a Glance

- ✚ A Concussion is a Mild Traumatic Brain Injury. All concussions are serious
- ✚ Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness
- ✚ Concussions have different consequences for each individual; hence close observation and assessment of the injured person is essential.

What is a Concussion?

A Concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury, caused by a blow to the head, disrupting or interfering with a person's normal functioning.

When a concussion takes place



The brain
suddenly shifts,
shakes or rotates



Diagnosis

Concussion is difficult to diagnose, hence clinical and neuropsychological assessment are so important.

Concussion can often be presented in its most obvious form, such as passing out or feeling light-headed. Other symptoms can be a milder format, and so harder to diagnose.

Concussion Signs and Symptoms

Signs observed by Coaching Staff/Parent/Mentor

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of the game, score or opponent
- Moves Clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behaviour or personality change
- Can't recall events after hit or fall
- Inappropriate playing behaviour

Signs reported by Player

- Headache or pressure
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not 'feel right' or is 'feeling down'

Action Plan for Concussed Players

1. Remove the player from play
2. Ensure the player is evaluated by a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion. Do not try to judge the seriousness of the injury yourself.
3. Inform the players parents or guardian about the possible concussion; indicating the signs and symptoms to watch out for post-injury.
4. Keep the player out of play the day of the injury, and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating concussion, says the player is symptom free, and OK to return to play.

Recovering from concussion should not be rushed, nor should pressure be applied to players to resume playing until recovery is complete. Risk of re-injury is high and may lead to recurrent concussion.

Prevention and Observation

Most people with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. However for some people signs and symptoms of concussion can last for days, weeks or longer; emphasising the necessity of observation post-injury.

Prevention is better than cure. ABI Ireland urge that all players from different sporting bodies remember to wear any recommended protective headgear for their specialist sport.

Brought to you as a part of ABI Ireland's 'Mind Your Head' campaign