How to Put Together Your Concussion History

CONCUSSION & CTE FOUNDATION

Summary

One of the first things your doctor will ask you is about your concussion history. Coming prepared to your first appointment will help you get on the road to recovery as soon as possible. It can be a challenge, especially if you're experiencing memory loss.

Here are a few tips from the Concussion & CTE Foundation to help you out!

1

Start with the diagnosed concussion. If you've been diagnosed with a concussion before, have as much information about the injury ready as possible:

- What caused the impact?
- What symptoms did you experience?
- How severe were those symptoms?
- Did symptoms change as you recovered?

Patterns from previous injuries can be helpful in predicting what recovery might look like.

2

Severity matters. Some people get worried when they start counting their concussions and realize they have had more than they thought. It's important to remember not all concussions are created equal: the severity of past concussions may be more important than the total number. How long your symptoms lasted is the best indicator; the longer the duration, the greater the severity.

3

When they happened counts too. The interval between injuries is important when looking at the full concussion history picture. Two concussions one week apart is a much different story than two concussions a year apart, even if they are of similar severity. Organizing a timeline with all of your concussions is a helpful way to easily see how they cluster, and can help provide background for your doctor to reference when developing an appropriate return to activity and long-term concussion management plan. Be sure to have it ready for your first appointment.

4

Consider undiagnosed concussions. Just because a doctor never made a diagnosis doesn't mean a concussion didn't happen. After you've recounted your diagnosed concussions, take a look at the symptoms of a concussion and try to remember instances where you felt any symptoms after a hit to the head. It's not uncommon for estimates to increase after reading the definition of a concussion.

Remember: *dings and bell ringers count.*

Find a doctor

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