What to Do After a Concussion

CONCUSSION & CTE FOUNDATION

Summary

Your immediate response to a possible concussion is crucial in your recovery. CLF recommends you take the following steps:

1

Remove yourself from activities that could cause head trauma, stress your heart, or strain your brain. Resting immediately after concussion gives you the best chance of making a speedy recovery. Resting means not exerting yourself physically or cognitively, and ensuring you are safe from subsequent head impacts that could cause a second injury. Immediacy is critical - playing out the rest of a game, or even finishing the period, adds an average of five days to recovery time.

2

Get evaluated. If you had any signs or symptoms of a concussion, you should assume it was a concussion until you have a chance to be evaluated by an appropriate medical professional.

Even if you passed a sideline evaluation, no test is perfect and signs and symptoms can appear days after the impact.

3

Take it easy. The first step in every recovery plan is to rest your body and your brain. If it causes your symptoms to worsen, don't do it. This means no strenuous exercise, avoiding screens like television, computers, and your phone, and getting enough sleep. It may also mean taking time off from school or work, or avoiding situations with loud noise, bright lights, or crowds. However, this doesn't mean isolate yourself in a dark room for a week. Too much isolation can be harmful, contributing to feelings of anxiety, depression, and resulting in increased recovery time. Spend time with loved ones but avoid situations that make you feel worse.

4

Monitor your symptoms carefully. Take note of any symptoms you experience, when you experience them, and how severe they are. Are they consistent? Do they get worse in certain situations? All this information will be helpful when you talk with your doctor.

5

Keep a positive attitude. Most people recover from a concussion within a month. This is almost always a temporary problem that will get better if you manage it correctly.

We can help

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