



ARCHDIOCESE OF BALTIMORE

Catholic Youth Sports CONCUSSION AWARENESS

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works.

Concussions may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may appear right after the injury or can take hours or days to become fully apparent. If you or your student-athlete observe any symptoms or signs of a concussion, seek medical attention right away.

What are the symptoms of a student athlete who is experiencing a concussion?

- Headaches
- “Pressure in head”
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
- Heightened sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness
- Change in sleep patterns
- Amnesia
- “Don’t feel right”
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability
- More emotional
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment

What are the signs of a concussion that might be observed by teammates, parents, and coaches?

Upon sustaining a concussion, the student athlete may:

- Appear dazed
- Have a vacant facial expression
- Become confused about their assignment
- Forget plays
- Become unsure of the game, score, or opponent
- Move clumsily or display incoordination
- Answer questions slowly
- Slur their speech
- Show behavior or personality changes
- Become unable to recall events before the hit
- Become unable to recall events after the hit
- Experience seizures or convulsions
- Lose consciousness

What can happen if a student athlete continues to play with a concussion or returns too soon after having a concussion?

Student athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion must be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves student athletes especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the student athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and potentially fatal consequences.

It is well known that adolescent and teenage athletes will often underreport symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents, and student athletes is the key for student athletes' safety.

What happens if a student athlete is suspected of suffering a concussion?

Any student athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion must be removed from the game or practice immediately. No student athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without clearance from a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours.

Parents/Guardians: You should inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

I have received and reviewed a copy of the Archdiocese of Baltimore CYS Concussion Awareness Information Sheet.

Student Signature

Date

Print Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Name

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Print Name

The following portion should be completed by the student athlete's parent(s) or legal guardian(s).

Has the above-listed student athlete experienced a traumatic head injury (i.e., a blow to the head)?

Yes No

If yes, when? (Month/Year) _____

Has the above-listed student athlete ever received medical attention for a head injury?

Yes No

If yes, when? (Month/Year) _____

If yes, please describe the circumstances: