



# Pope John High School XXIII Home Care for Concussions

A concussion is a violent jarring or shaking that results in a disturbance of brain function



**Concussion:** A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) that may result in a bad headache, altered levels of alertness, or unconsciousness. It temporarily interferes with the way your brain works, and it can affect memory, judgment, reflexes, speech, balance, coordination, and sleep patterns.

**Causes:** A concussion may result from a fall, sports activities, car accidents, etc. Significant movement of the brain (called jarring) in any direction can cause concussions. Sometime concussions cause you to lose alertness (become unconscious). However, concussions don't always involve a loss of consciousness. Most people who have a concussion never black out.

**Symptoms:** Symptoms of a concussion can range from mild to severe. They can include:

Standard Symptoms of Concussions	
Confusion, feeling spacey, or not thinking straight	Nausea and vomiting
Headache	Seeing Flashing lights
Sensitivity to light or sounds	Feeling like you have "lost time"
Memory loss (amnesia) of events before the injury or immediately after	Altered level of consciousness (drowsy, hard to arouse, or similar changes)

<b><u>SYMPTOMS THAT REQUIRE EMERGENCY ATTENTION!!!</u></b>	
Changes in alertness and consciousness (hard to awaken)	Unequal pupils, unusual eye movements, double or blurred vision
Convulsions (Seizures)	Asymmetry to the face or swelling along the scalp
Muscle weakness on one or both sides	Severe headache or headache that worsens
Persistent confusion	Repeated vomiting
Slurred or garbled speech	Labored or irregular breathing

Concussions must be taken very seriously as they can have long-term damaging effects. As long as you have lingering symptoms from a concussion your brain is still healing. Even another relatively mild blow to the head can cause a condition known as "Second Impact Syndrome" which can have *fatal effects*.

## **HOME CARE:**

- 1) **SCHEDULE APPOINTMENT WITH FAMILY DOCTOR IMMEDIATELY!!!**
- 2) Upon returning to school Athlete must bring the Athletic Trainer written documentation from the Doctor concerning athlete's diagnosis and return to play protocol.
- 3) The Athlete should not be left alone for the first **48 hours** after the injury occurs
- 4) Have the athlete avoid anything that requires a lot of concentration (studying, computer work, watching TV, playing video games, or texting) over heating, and loud atmospheres until symptoms lessen.
- 5) Expect the athlete to need to sleep more than their usual schedule.

Please ***do not give*** an athlete suffering acute trauma to the head ***Aspirin, Ibuprofen, Advil, Motrin, and any form of alcohol*** for at least 72 hours following injury or until a physician allows it. In extreme cases these items can speed up bleeding that can occur in the brain. In a standard case they mask symptoms that the Athletic Trainer and Physician need to be able to document accurately to insure the safety of the healing brain tissue.

## **CARE PROVIDED BY ATHLETIC TRAINER:**

- 1) The Athletic Trainer will evaluate athlete on a daily basis to check progress
- 2) The Coaching staff will be made aware the Athlete cannot participate until cleared by a medical Doctor and the Athletic Trainer after the appropriate time has passed.
- 3) The Athlete will not be required to sit and watch practices. Athlete will be sent home to rest and heal
- 4) The Athletic Trainer will schedule IMPACT tests at the appropriate time for the Athlete to complete. All testing results will be shared with Athlete's Doctor.
- 5) The Athletic Trainer will put Athlete through return to play protocol with written permission form the Doctor.

### **Warning:**

Please realize that the above are only guidelines to assist you. If a sign or symptom develops that is new and is not mentioned above, err on the side of safety and have the athlete evaluated by emergency medical staff.

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**Please feel free to contact the Athletic Trainer with any questions at any time.**