

HHS STUDENT ATHLETES AND THEIR PARENTS

Quotes from student athletes and parents:

“I just want to go back to playing because my teammates really need me.” (One week later)

“I was having dizzy spells months after my concussion.” (Six months later)

“After my son received medical clearance to play two weeks later, I realized I had no way to tell whether his brain was healing, so I didn’t give him permission to play. Weeks later he said he still had a feeling of ‘heaviness’ in his head. Thank goodness we waited.”

“What if he gets another concussion? The doctor said with a second concussion one and one is never equal to two. It is always more severe.”

“I don’t really remember that much about it. I just remember my head really hurting.” (Two months later)

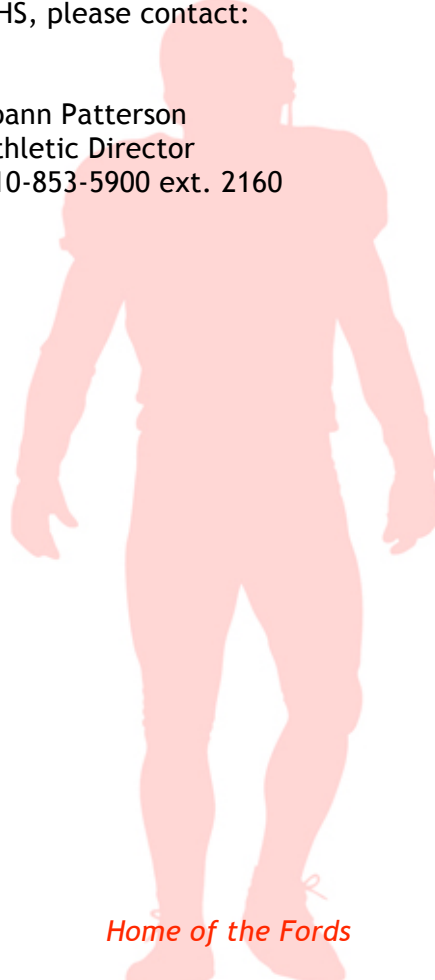
“It hurts if I read something or concentrate for more than 15 minutes.” (Three weeks later)

“Our doctor said that most teenagers take 4 weeks to recover (90%) and the other 10% can take up to three months. My son took three months. If he would have gone back after two weeks, like the ER said, his risk for permanent injury was staggering.”

CONTACTS

For a demo of the ImPACT test or to discuss concussion management at HHS, please contact:

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SPORTS CONCUSSIONS AND THE STUDENT ATHLETE

HAVERFORD HIGH SCHOOL



CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT
AT HHS: INFORMATION FOR
PARENTS AND COACHES



WHAT IS CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that temporarily disturbs how the brain works. You do not actually have to hit your head or be “knocked out” to suffer a concussion. Concussions can occur in any sport. All concussions deserve serious attention.

Symptoms of concussion can vary widely from person to person. They can include confusion, dizziness, headache or pressure in the head, changes in vision, forgetfulness, irritability, sensitivity to noise and/or light, or nausea. Symptoms can last for a few minutes to days, weeks, months, or sometimes even longer. Symptoms not only affect participation in sports, but can also interfere with academic performance.

THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATING PARENTS, COACHES, TEACHERS AND STUDENT ATHLETES

It is natural for student athletes to want to return to play as soon as possible after an injury. Sometimes athletes don't even want to admit that they are hurt for fear that it will affect their place on the team or hurt the team's chances to win.

However, when the injury involves concussion, returning to play too soon can place a student athlete at risk for a more severe brain injury. This is because the brain is more vulnerable to injury while it is still healing. The

effects of one injury on top of another are cumulative. In rare cases, death can occur.

Understanding what concussions are, learning how to identify them, making safe return-to-play decisions, and working to prevent subsequent concussions are important for athletic trainers, coaches, parents and student athletes. Haverford Athletics is committed to these goals.

The best way to help the team, whether you are the student athlete, the parent or the coach, is for the injured student athlete to return to play after fully healing.

A student athlete talks about her experience with a concussion (a CDC-produced video):
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=GB&hl=en-GB&v=y1qZDbk3M40>

RESOURCES

Resources are the ImPACT testing program and the Heads Up program by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

The Centers for Disease Control implemented the Heads Up program in 2006 to promote concussion education. See their website for guides and fact sheets for coaches, parents and student athletes.
http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high_school.html

IMPACT

When sports-related concussions occur at Haverford, the health and recovery of the student athlete is the main focus of the HHS athletic trainers. However, the need to assess neurocognitive function is critical when making return-to-play decisions.

HHS is implementing a concussion management program called ImPACT to help assess the effects of concussion and use that information to make safe return-to-play decisions.

ImPACT is short for “Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing.” It is a computerized program that evaluates and documents multiple aspects of neurocognitive function. Examples include attention, reaction time, and working memory.

A student athlete receives a baseline test. After a concussion, the student athlete is tested again and the results are compared with his or her own baseline test. Tests are evaluated by a physician or a neuropsychologist. Return to play does not occur until test results are within a normal range.

ImPACT helps clinicians take the guesswork out of concussion management and promotes safe return-to-play decisions for student athletes. For more information, please see <http://www.impacttest.com/>

It's better to miss the game than the whole season.