

## Concussion Information for John Burroughs Athletes and their Families

- **What is a concussion?**

A concussion is an injury to the brain caused by a blow to the head or body. This injury causes the brain to not function normally for a period of time. Concussions are sometimes referred to as mild traumatic brain injuries. The majority of concussions get better with time. However, occasionally there can be a more significant problem, which is why monitoring symptoms is important. When you have a concussion, you may have problems with concentration and memory, have a decreased ability to focus, feel fatigued, have a headache, or feel nauseated. Bright lights and loud noises may bother you. You may feel irritable or have other symptoms.

- **What should I watch for?**

After evaluation by your team physician or athletic trainer, it may be determined that you are safe to go home. Otherwise, you may be taken to the hospital. **If you are sent home, you should not be left alone. A responsible adult should accompany you. It is generally best to not have the athlete drive immediately following their concussion.**

Symptoms from your concussion may persist when you are sent home but should not worsen, nor should new symptoms develop. You should watch for such things as :

- Increasing headache
- Increasing nausea or vomiting
- Increasing confusion
- Unusual sleepiness or difficulty being awakened
- Trouble using your arms or legs
- Garbled speech
- Convulsions or seizures

If you notice any of these problems or have any other problem that appears worse compared to how you felt at the time you left the stadium or practice, immediately call the physician or athletic trainer. In an emergency, have someone transport you to a hospital.

- **Is it okay to go to sleep?**

Concussions often make a player feel drowsy or tired. As long as you are not getting worse, it is all right for you to sleep, which actually may aid in your recovery. We do want the responsible adult to be at home with you in case any problems arise. Athletes do not need to be awoken during the night.

- **May I take something for pain?**

Do not take any medication unless your team physician has told you to do so. Normally, we do not advise anything stronger than Tylenol. Avoid the use of aspirin, Motrin/Ibuprofen/Advil, Aleve/Naproxen, or any other anti-inflammatory medication that you may have been taking. We also ask that you not consume any alcohol and avoid caffeine and any other stimulants. If you are taking any supplements, we would suggest you discontinue the use of them as well. The team physician will determine when you can restart medications and supplements.

- **May I eat after the game?**

It is fine for you to eat if you are hungry. Remember, some players do have a sense of nausea and fatigue, and often find that their appetite is depressed immediately after a concussion. Do not force yourself to eat.

- **Do I need a CT scan or MRI scan?**

If the team physicians have determined that you are able to go home after the game, these types of diagnostic tests are not necessary. If you are sent to a hospital with a more serious injury, a CT scan is likely. If your symptoms linger for longer than anticipated, a CT or MRI scan may be a consideration.

- **How long will I be observed?**

You are to report to the training room the morning after your concussion. You will be assessed by the team physician or athletic trainers. You will take a computerized neurocognitive test between 24-48 hours after your concussion. Your symptoms will be monitored and return to play varies by individual, and will be based on physical exam, symptoms, and returning to baseline on your neurocognitive test.

TELEPHONE NUMBERS : Athletic Trainer : Dean Tiffany 314-993-4040 ext 393  
Team Concussion Physician : Dr. Mark Halstead (Washington University)  
← Chesterfield Office appointment line : (314) 514-3500

You are to report to the training room on : Day \_\_\_\_\_ Time \_\_\_\_\_