

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

## Concussion Protocols Athletic Department Handbook



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# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

## Table of Contents

<i>Model Policy and Guidance for Sports-Related Concussion &amp; Mild Traumatic Brain Injury</i>	<i>Pg. 3</i>
<i>Signs and Symptoms of Concussions</i>	<i>Pg. 4</i>
<i>Concussion Game Play Management Protocols</i>	<i>Pg. 5</i>
<i>Concussion / Return to Play</i>	<i>Pg. 6</i>
<i>Concussion / Return to the Classroom</i>	<i>Pg. 8</i>
<i>Agreement of Athletic Policies and Procedures</i>	<i>Pg. 9</i>

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

## Model Policy and Guidance for Schools for Sports-Related Concussion/Mild Traumatic Brain Injury

### Concussion Policy Context:

The decisions made on the policy governing the care of student-athletes who have sustained sports-related concussions and head injuries are dependent on the individual characteristics of each school district, charter, and non-public school. Each board of education, however, should develop a policy regarding the care and treatment of a student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a sports-related concussion or head injury. This policy should not only cover the return of the athlete to the field of competition and or practice, but it should also define the appropriate return of the student to their academic pursuits.

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### Requirements for Concussion Policy Contents

It is suggested that the policy contain, at a minimum, the following components:

- **Once each school year, a coach shall complete the concussion management** certification training course offered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the ***National Federation of State High School Associations***, or another provider approved by the Texas Department of Health. A coach shall not coach an athletic activity until the coach completes the training course required under this subsection.
- The school will hold an informational meeting, prior to the start of each athletic season, for all competitors regarding concussion management and how pre-season baseline assessments can aid in the evaluation, management, and recovery process. These meetings may also include parents, guardians, coaches, physicians, neuropsychologists, athletic trainers, and physical therapists.
- A student desiring to participate in any athletic activity and the student's parent or guardian shall, each school year, sign and return to the school an acknowledgment of their receipt and review of concussion and traumatic brain injury information.
- All medical personnel, authorized to make decisions on when the student-athlete can return to play must complete or have completed, training in the evaluation and management of concussion.

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

- Authority is granted to game officials, the coach, athletic trainer, licensed physician, licensed physical therapist, or other individuals trained in the recognition of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and designated by the school, **to determine that a student-athlete exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion or traumatic brain injury.**
- Once the student-athlete has exhibited signs or symptoms of a concussion/traumatic brain injury **he/she must be removed by the coach from participation.** The student-athlete cannot return to practice or play until the student-athlete is **evaluated and cleared for return to participation in writing by an appropriate medical professional** (as defined in the Safety in Youth Sports Act) with training in the evaluation and management of concussion.
- **Any coach who violates this policy will be suspended from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of that season.** For a second violation, the coach will be suspended from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of that season and for the next season. For a third violation, the coach will be permanently suspended from coaching any athletic activity.

## Signs and Symptoms of Concussions

Student-athletes exhibiting any signs or symptoms of a sports-related concussion or other head injuries during practice or competition shall be immediately removed from play and may not return to play until evaluated and cleared for return participation in writing by an appropriate medical professional. **Some of the signs and symptoms are as follows:**

### **Signs of Concussion:**

(Could be observed by Coaches, Athletic Trainers, School/Team Physicians, School Nurses, and Physical Therapists)

### **The signs of a concussion include:**

1. Appears dazed, stunned, or disoriented, demonstrates decreased alertness
2. Forgets plays, or demonstrates short-term memory difficulty
3. Slurs words
4. Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination
5. Answers questions slowly or inaccurately
6. Exhibits seizures or vomiting

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

7. Changes in the level of consciousness

(Estimates are that <10% of concussions result in the loss of consciousness)

## **Symptoms of Concussion**

(Reported by the student-athlete to Coaches, Athletic Trainers, School/Team Physicians, School Nurses, Parent/ Guardian, or Physical Therapist)

### **The symptoms of a concussion include:**

1. Headache
2. Nausea
3. Balance problems or dizziness
4. Double vision or changes in vision
5. Sensitivity to light or sound/noise
6. Feeling sluggish or foggy
7. Difficulty with concentration and short-term memory
8. Sleep disturbance
9. Irritability or changes in personality and behavior

## **Game Play Concussion Management Protocol**

**Once a student-athlete has been removed from competition or practice because of signs or symptoms of a concussion, the following Concussion Management Protocol must be followed:**

1. Emergency medical treatment should be pursued **if there is a deterioration of symptoms** including seizure, altered level of consciousness, vomiting, altered pupillary findings, or direct neck pain associated with the injury.

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

2. **All appropriate school officials should be notified of the event**, including the school physician, Athletic Trainer, Physical Therapist, Athletic Director, Building Administrator, school nurse, school psychologist, school counselor, and **all the student's teachers.**
3. School officials **must contact the student athlete's parent/guardian** and inform him/her of the suspected sports-related concussion or head injury.
4. School officials shall provide the student-athlete and their parents or guardians with information on the continuing care of a person with a concussion. This material is available through the Texas Departments of Health or Education Agency, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention ([www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)).
5. When appropriate, a referral should be made to the regional Brain STEPS Team. This team will consult with school teams and families in developing and delivering educational services for the student who has sustained a concussion.
6. The student-athlete **must be evaluated by an appropriate medical professional who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.**
7. **The student-athlete must receive written clearance from an appropriate medical professional**, trained in the evaluation and management of concussions that states the student-athlete is asymptomatic at rest and may begin a graduated return-to-play protocol.

Complete physical, cognitive, emotional, and social rest is advised while the student-athlete is experiencing symptoms and signs of a concussion/traumatic brain injury. Minimize mental exertion, limit overstimulation, limit cell phone or computer usage, testing, video gaming, multi-tasking, etc.

## Concussion / Return to Play

After written medical clearance is given by an appropriate medical professional the student-athlete may begin a graduated individualized return-to-play protocol supervised by an athletic trainer or licensed physical therapist, school/team physician, school nurse, or in cases where they are not available **a physician or licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of sports-related concussions.**

**The following graduated return to play should be followed:**

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

## Day 1:

Completion of a full day of normal cognitive activities (school day, studying for tests, watching practice, interacting with peers) **without re-emergence of any signs or symptoms**. If no return of symptoms, the next day advance to:

## Day 2:

Light aerobic exercise includes walking, swimming, or stationary cycling, keeping the intensity < 70% maximum predicted heart rate: no resistance training. The objective of this step is to increase heart rate. If no return of symptoms, the next day advance to:

## Day 3:

Sport-specific exercise including skating, and/or running; no head impact activities. The objective of this step is to add movement and continue to increase the heart rate. If no return of symptoms, the next day advance to:

## Day 4:

Non-contact training drills (e.g., passing drills). The student-athlete may initiate progressive resistance training. If no return of symptoms, the next day advance to:

## Day 5:

Participation in normal training activities. The objective of this step is to restore confidence and to assess the functional skills of the coaching staff. If no return of symptoms, the next day advance to:

## Day 6:

Return to playing involving normal exertion or game activity.

If concussion symptoms recur during the graduated return-to-play protocol, **the student-athlete will return, at a minimum, to the previous level of activity that caused no symptoms, and the attending physician should be notified.**

Utilization of standardized tools such as symptom checklists, and comparison of post-injury performance to preseason baseline cognitive, and balance testing are suggested.

# Yes Prep Northline Athletics

## Concussion / Return to Classroom

Temporary learning support accommodation may be needed for student-athletes with Sports-Related Head Injuries to return to the classroom.

Rest is the best “medicine” for healing concussions or other head injuries. The concussed brain is affected in many functional aspects because of the injury. Memory, attention span, concentration, and speed of processing significantly impact learning. Further, exposing the concussed student-athlete to the stimulating school environment may exacerbate symptoms and delay the resolution of symptoms needed for recovery. Accordingly, consideration of the cognitive effects of returning to the classroom is also an important part of the treatment of sports-related concussions and head injuries.

### **Students who return to school after a concussion may need to:**

1. Take rest breaks as needed.
2. Spend fewer hours at school or have a shortened school day.
3. Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments in ALL classes.
4. Receive help with schoolwork. (e.g., pre-teaching, outlines, note taker)
5. Reduce time spent on the computer, reading, and writing.
6. Be granted early dismissal from each class to avoid crowded hallways.
7. No standardized testing (e.g., PSSA, SAT) during the initial recovery window of 2-4 weeks.



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By signing below, I agree to the policies and procedures in the student-athlete, sportsmanship, and concussion handbooks. I have read the handbooks and do not have any questions regarding the policies and procedures for my child's involvement in athletics or the spectator policies in place for athletic-sanctioned activities at Yes Prep Northline. I understand all the information outlined in the handbooks in its entirety and will uphold all expectations as set forth by the athletic department at Yes Prep Northline.

Student-Athlete Signature:

Parent First & Last Name:

Parent Signature:

Parent Phone Number: (  ) -  -