LHSAA MEDICAL HISTORY EVALUATION

IMPORTANT: This form must be completed *annually*, kept on file with the school, and is subject to inspection by the Rules Compliance Team.

Please Print

Name:_____ School:_____ Grade:_____ Date:_____

Sport(s):_____ Sex: M / F Date of Birth:_____ Age:_____ Cell Phone:_____

Home Address:_____ City:_____ State:_____ Zip Code:_____ Home Phone:_____

Parent / Guardian:_____ Employer:_____ Work Phone:_____

FAMILY MEDICAL HISTORY: Has any member of your family under age 50 had these conditions?

Yes	No	Condition	Whom	Yes	No	Condition	Whom	Yes	No	Condition	Whom
☐	☐	Heart Attack/Disease	_____	☐	☐	Sudden Death	_____	☐	☐	Arthritis	_____
☐	☐	Stroke	_____	☐	☐	High Blood Pressure	_____	☐	☐	Kidney Disease	_____
☐	☐	Diabetes	_____	☐	☐	Sickle Cell Trait/Anemia	_____	☐	☐	Epilepsy	_____

ATHLETE ORTHOPAEDIC HISTORY: Has the athlete had any of the following injuries?

Yes	No	Condition	Date	Yes	No	Condition	Date	Yes	No	Condition	Date
☐	☐	Head Injury / Concussion	_____	☐	☐	Neck Injury / Stinger	_____	☐	☐	Shoulder L / R	_____
☐	☐	Elbow L / R	_____	☐	☐	Arm / Wrist / Hand L / R	_____	☐	☐	Back	_____
☐	☐	Hip L / R	_____	☐	☐	Thigh L / R	_____	☐	☐	Knee L / R	_____
☐	☐	Lower Leg L / R	_____	☐	☐	Chronic Shin Splints	_____	☐	☐	Ankle L / R	_____
☐	☐	Foot L / R	_____	☐	☐	Severe Muscle Strain	_____	☐	☐	Pinched Nerve	_____
☐	☐	Chest	_____	Previous Surgeries: _____							

ATHLETE MEDICAL HISTORY: Has the athlete had any of these conditions?

Yes	No	Condition	Yes	No	Condition	Yes	No	Condition
☐	☐	Heart Murmur / Chest Pain / Tightness	☐	☐	Asthma / Prescribed Inhaler	☐	☐	Menstrual irregularities: Last Cycle:_____
☐	☐	Seizures	☐	☐	Shortness of breath / Coughing	☐	☐	Rapid weight loss / gain
☐	☐	Kidney Disease	☐	☐	Hernia	☐	☐	Take supplements/vitamins
☐	☐	Irregular Heartbeat	☐	☐	Knocked out / Concussion	☐	☐	Heat related problems
☐	☐	Single Testicle	☐	☐	Heart Disease	☐	☐	Recent Mononucleosi
☐	☐	High Blood Pressure	☐	☐	Diabetes	☐	☐	Enlarged Spleen
☐	☐	Dizzy / Fainting	☐	☐	Liver Disease	☐	☐	Sickle Cell Trait/Anemia
☐	☐	Organ Loss (kidney, spleen, etc)	☐	☐	Tuberculosis	☐	☐	Overnight in hospital
☐	☐	Surgery	☐	☐	Prescribed EPI PEN	☐	☐	Allergies (Food, Drugs)_____
☐	☐	Medications _____						

List Dates for: Last Tetanus Shot:_____ Measles Immunization:_____ Meningitis Vaccine: _____

PARENTS' WAIVER FORM

To the best of our knowledge, we have given true & accurate information & hereby grant permission for the physical screening evaluation. We understand the evaluation involves a limited examination and the screening is not intended to nor will it prevent injury or sudden death. We further understand that if the examination is provided without expectation of payment, there shall be no cause of action pursuant to Louisiana R.S. 9:2798 against the team volunteer health-care provider and/or employer under Louisiana law.

This waiver, executed on the date below by the undersigned medical doctor, osteopathic doctor, nurse practitioner or physician's assistant and parent of the student athlete named above, is done so in compliance with Louisiana law with the full understanding that there shall be no cause of action for any loss or damage caused by any act or omission related to the health care services if rendered voluntarily and without expectation of payment herein unless such loss or damage was caused by gross negligence. Additionally,

1. If, in the judgment of a school representative, the named student-athlete needs care or treatment as a result of an injury or sickness, I do hereby request, consent and authorize for such care as may be deemed necessary..... Yes No
2. I understand that if the medical status of my child changes in any significant manner after his/her physical examination, I will notify his/her principal of the change immediately..... Yes No
3. I give my permission for the athletic trainer to release information concerning my child's injuries to the head coach/athletic director/principal of his/her school..... Yes No
4. By my signature below, I am agreeing to allow my child's medical history/exam form and all eligibility forms to be reviewed by the LHSAA or its representative(s) or the associated medical personnel..... Yes No

_____ _____ _____

Date Signed by Parent | Signature of Parent | Typed or Printed Name of Parent

Health Care Provider section on page 2

IMPORTANT: This form must be completed *annually*, kept on file with the school, and is subject to inspection by the Rules Compliance Team.

Name:_____ Date of Birth:_____ Age:_____ Date:_____
School:_____ Grade:_____ Sport(s):_____

II. COMPLETED ANNUALLY BY MEDICAL DOCTOR (MD), OSTEOPATHIC DR. (DO), NURSE PRACTITIONER (APRN) or PHYSICIAN'S ASSISTANT (PA)

Height _____	Weight _____	Blood Pressure_____	Pulse_____

GENERAL MEDICAL EXAM :

	Norm	Abnl
ENT	☐	☐
Lungs	☐	☐
Heart	☐	☐
Abdomen	☐	☐
Skin	☐	☐

ORTHOPAEDIC EXAM :

I. Spine / Neck

	Norm	Abnl
Cervical	☐	☐
Thoracic	☐	☐
Lumbar	☐	☐

II. Upper Extremity

	Norm	Abnl
Shoulder	☐	☐
Elbow	☐	☐
Hand / Fingers	☐	☐
Wrist	☐	☐

III. Lower Extremity

	Norm	Abn
Knee	☐	☐
Hip	☐	☐
Ankle	☐	☐

Health Care Provider notes (if needed):_____

[ ] **Medically eligible for all sports without restriction**

[ ] **Medically eligible for certain sports**_____

[ ] **Medically eligible for all sports without restriction with recommendations for further evaluation or treatment of** _____

[ ] **Not medically eligible pending further evaluation**

[ ] **Not medically eligible for any sports**

This recommendation is from a limited screening.

_____ _____ _____
Printed Name of MD, DO, APRN or PA **Signature of MD, DO, APRN or PA** **Date of Medical Examination**

Revised 5/23 **This physical expires 13 months from the date it was signed and dated by the MD, DO, APRN or PA.**

ST. TAMMANY PARISH PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Frank J. Jabbia
Superintendent

Steve E. Alfonso, Jr.
Associate Superintendent

Kimberly B. Gardner
Assistant Superintendent

Melissa Langlois, Ed.D.
Assistant Superintendent

District	Board Members
1	Matthew E. Greene
2	Roslyn H. Hanson
3	Adaline V. Rutherford
4	Kalinda Fauntleroy
5	Brandon Harrell
6	Amanda R. Martin
7	Isabelle Moore
8	Mike Peterson, Ph.D.
9	Gia R. Baker
10	Deborah McCollum
11	Tammy W. Lamy
12	Michelle Hirstius
13	James Braud
14	Dennis S. Cousin
15	Michelle Ruffino Gallaher

Dear Parent/Guardian:

The St. Tammany Parish School Board, its employees, agents and insurer's have no liability, and accept no liability for injuries or accidents occurring to students during their participation in interscholastic athletics or sports and related extracurricular teams and activities. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) assume any and all risks, including without limitation of risk injury and risk of incurring medical expenses associated with the participation by the student.

The St. Tammany Parish School Board does not provide a base accident-medical expenses insurance plan for students, however, the School Board does provide a catastrophic policy for all interscholastic athletes, including interscholastic football and cheerleaders and participants of non-sport extra-curricular activities. Details regarding provisions of this plan are available through the School Board office. If you have a son or daughter participating in interscholastic sports or cheerleading, we recommend you investigate the following:

1. Check with your own health insurance carrier to determine the nature and extent of coverage available to you due to athletic injury.

2. If athletic injuries are not covered or only partially covered through your current health plan, consider purchasing a rider to that plan.

3. Contact the School's Athletic Department for information regarding an insurance plan designed for students that is offered at the beginning of the school year or throughout the year upon your request.

Sincerely,

Frank J. Jabbia
Superintendent

Learning to Last a Lifetime.®

SCHOOL WAIVER FORM

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITES

THIS DOCUMENT MUST BE SIGNED BY THE STUDENT AND BY THE STUDENT'S PARENT OR LEGAL CUSTODIAN BEFORE PARTICIPATION. STUDENTS MAY NOT PARTICIPATE WITHOUT THE STUDENT'S AND PARENT'S/LEGAL CUSTODIAN'S SIGNATURE.

PARENTS, LEGAL CUSTODIANS, OR STUDENTS WHO DO NOT WISH TO ACCEPT THE RISK DESCRIBED IN THIS WARNING SHOULD NOT SIGN THIS FORM. The student and parent/legal custodian recognize that participation in interscholastic athletics and related extracurricular activities involves some inherent risks for potentially severe injuries including, but not limited to, serious neck, head and spinal injuries, serious injury to virtually all bones, joints, ligaments, muscles, tendons, and other aspects of the musculoskeletal system, serious injury or impairment to other aspects of the body, or effects to the general health and well-being of the child, and in rare cases death. Although serious injuries are not common in supervised school athletic programs and related extracurricular activities, it is impossible to eliminate all risk. Because of these inherent risks, the student and their parent/legal custodian have a responsibility to help reduce that risk. Participants must obey all safety rules, report all physical and hygiene problems to their coaches, follow a proper conditioning program, and inspect their own equipment daily.

I authorize medical treatment should the need arise for such treatment while I or my child/ward ("student") is under the supervision of the St. Tammany Parish School Board school. I consent to medical treatment for the student following an injury or illness suffered during practice and/or a contest. I understand that in the case of injury or illness requiring treatment by medical personnel and transportation to a health care facility, that a reasonable attempt will be made to contact the parent/legal custodian in the case of the student being a minor, but that, if necessary, the student will be treated and transported via ambulance to the nearest hospital. I further authorize the use or disclosure of my student's personally identifiable health information should treatment for illness or injury become necessary.

I understand all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. Further, I understand that if my student is removed from a practice or competition due to a suspected concussion, he or she will be unable to return to participation that day. After that day, written authorization from a physician (M.D. or D.O.) or an athletic trainer working under the supervision of a physician will be required before the student is allowed to return to participation.

The student and parent/legal custodian individually and on behalf of the student, hereby irrevocably, and unconditionally release, acquit, and discharge, without limitation, the St. Tammany Parish School Board, its officers, agents, attorneys, representatives and employees (collectively, the "Releasees") from any and all losses, claims, demands, actions and causes of action, obligations, damages, and costs or expenses of any nature (including attorney's fees) that the student and/or legal custodian incur or sustain to person, property or both, which arise out of, result from, occur during or are otherwise connected with the student's participation in interscholastic athletics or sports and related extracurricular activities. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) assume any and all risks, including without limitation risk of injury and risk of incurring medical expenses associated with the participation by the student.

SCHOOL WAIVER FORM

EXTRACURRICULAR ACTIVITES

The St. Tammany Parish School Board, its employees, agents and insurers have no liability, and accepts no liability for injuries or accidents occurring to students during their participation in interscholastic athletics or sports and related extracurricular teams or activities. The student and parent(s)/guardian(s) assume any and all risks, including without limitation risk of injury and risk of incurring medical expenses associated with the participation by the student.

Student's Name: _____ Sports/Activities: _____ Sex: M F

School: _____ Grade: ____ Age: ____ Date of Birth: ___/___/_____

Parent's/Guardian's Name: _____

Father's/Guardian's SS#: XXX-XX-_____ Mother's/Guardian's SS#: XXX-XX-_____

Work Address: _____

Phone Number (__) _____

Home Address: _____

Phone Number: (__) _____

Another Person to Contact: _____

Relationship: _____ Phone Number: (__) _____

Insurance Company: _____

Policy Number and/or Group Numbers: _____

ALLERGIES: _____

_____

Parent's Signature: _____ Date: _____

Student's Signature: _____ Date: _____
(if over age 18)

IMPORTANT NOTICE – It is the policy of the St. Tammany Parish School Board that **ALL** ATHLETES PARTICIPATING IN OUR SCHOOL SPORTS PROGRAMS must have either medical or accident insurance in order to participate! Please be sure to provide that information on this form. This information also becomes important in case of injury or illness and we are unable to immediately contact parents/guardians.

CREEKSIDE ATHLETICS

Revised 2/2023

Student Athlete By-Laws:

In accordance with La. State and St. Tammany Parish School Board Policies and guidelines

- ☐ Student athletes must maintain a **1.5 grade point average and must pass at least 5 subjects from the previous nine week grading period, in order to remain eligible for participation in any sport.**
- ☐ If a student turns 15 years of age before September 1st, they are not eligible to tryout for, or participate in any sport
- ☐ Student athletes are required to attend school for at least a ½ (half) day in order to play in a game or attend practice.
- ☐ The following information completed and submitted **before a student may tryout for, or participate in any sport:**
  - ☐ Proof of medical insurance
  - ☐ A completed LHSAA Sports Physical performed by a medical doctor
  - ☐ Emergency contact information and phone number(s)
  - ☐ Initialed and signed "LHSAA Parent and Student-Athlete Concussion Statement"
  - ☐ Completed "School Waiver Form for Extracurricular Activities"
  - ☐ Completed "Student Athlete By-Laws Form"
- ☐ Student athletes are required to have a ride to and from all practices and games.

  Coaches will notify student athletes about practice and game times at least 1 day in advance, unless unforeseen circumstances cause an unexpected change. If a player has not been picked up within 30 minutes after the end of practice, or a game, law enforcement will be notified and the player will be transported to and placed in the care of law enforcement. Signature of parent/guardian on this form authorizes such transport. **Repeated late pick up may result in removal from the team.**

- ☐ Student athletes are required to be at all practices and games. Repeated absences may result in removal from the team.
- ☐ Appropriate behavior and good sportsmanship is expected from all student athletes.
  Fighting, cursing, belittling and any other unsportsmanlike conduct **will not be tolerated** and may result in **dismissal from the team.**
- ☐ Student athletes are expected to be leaders, both on and off the field of play. Student athletes may be removed from the team upon their second administrative consequence (after school support, Saturday Support, ISS and Out of School Suspension), until the start of the following nine week term.

_____ has my permission to play _____ at Creekside Jr. High.
(Full Name of Student) (Sport(s)

By signing this form, I _____ and _____ understand and agree to follow all
(Parent/Guardian Name) (Student Athlete Name)
the by-laws of the Creekside Jr. High Athletic Department.

_____ _____ _____
(Parent/Guardian Signature) Date (Approved by Principal)

_____ _____ _____
(Student Athlete Signature) Date (Approved by Athletic Director)

Creekside Jr. High School Year: 2023-24

PERMISSION TO POST/DISPLAY PUBLIC INFORMATION FOR TEAM SPORTS

Parents,

Due to a change in Louisiana privacy laws, we now need your specific permission to display any of your child's personal information in public. This is needed to any and all school based programs or activities. Some examples of what could be displayed are as follows: formal or informal photos (team, small group, or individual), team member's first names with or without last initials or names, banners with pictures or names, shirts with student signatures or names, etc.

By signing below, you acknowledge that you have been made aware that this may occur due to the fact that your child is trying out for, or has become a participant of, a Creekside Jr. High sports team.

STUDENT NAME:_____

DIRECTIONS: Initial on the line that coordinates with your decision and then sign your name below.

_____My child has permission to have his or her personal information displayed in public.

_____My child has permission to have his or her personal information displayed in public with the **EXCEPTION** of:

_____

_____

_____ _____

Parent Signature **Date**

_____

Signature of School Administrator

Louisiana High School Athletic Association
Parent and Student-Athlete Concussion Statement

☐ I understand that it is my responsibility to report all injuries and illnesses to my coach, athletic trainer and/or team physician.

☐ I have read and understand the Concussion Fact Sheet.

After reading the Concussion Fact Sheet, I am aware of the following information:

Parent Initial	Student Initial	
_____	_____	A concussion is a brain injury, which I am responsible for reporting to my coach , athletic trainer, or team physician.
_____	_____	A concussion can affect my ability to perform everyday activities, and affect reaction time, balance, sleep, and classroom performance
_____	_____	You cannot see a concussion, but you might notice some of the symptoms right away. Other symptoms can show up hours or days after the injury.
_____	_____	If I suspect a teammate has a concussion, I am responsible for reporting the injury to my coach, athletic trainer, or team physician.
_____	_____	I will not return to play in a game or practice if I have received a blow to the head or body that results in concussion-related symptoms.
_____	_____	Following concussion the brain needs time to heal. You are much more likely to have a repeat concussion if you return to play before your symptoms resolve.
_____	_____	In rare cases, repeat concussions can cause permanent brain damage, and even death.

_____ _____

Signature of Student-Athlete Date

_____

Printed name of Student-Athlete

_____ _____

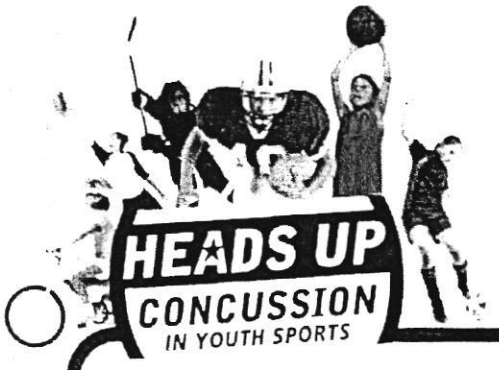
Signature of Parent/Guardian Date

_____

Printed name of Parent/Guardian

LHSAA

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC



A Fact Sheet for **ATHLETES**

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump or blow to the head
- Can change the way your brain normally works
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged"

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light
- Bothered by noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?

Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

Get a medical check up. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.

Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

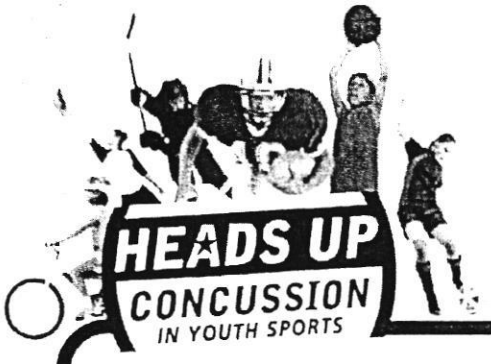
- Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
  - The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
  - Worn correctly and fit well
  - Used every time you play

July 2007

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

For more information and to order additional materials **free-of-charge**, visit:
www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit:
www.cdc.gov/injury



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
CDC

A Fact Sheet for **PARENTS**

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not "feel right"

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

1. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.

2. **Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.

3. **Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

July 2007

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

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit:
www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit:
www.cdc.gov/injury

National Federation of State High School Associations

A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports

What is a concussion?

- A concussion is a brain injury which results in a temporary disruption of normal brain function. A concussion occurs when the brain is violently rocked back and forth or twisted inside the skull as a result of a blow to the head or body. An athlete does not have to lose consciousness ("knocked-out") to suffer a concussion.

Concussion Facts

- It is estimated that over 140,000 high school athletes across the United States suffer a concussion each year. (Data from NFHS Injury Surveillance System)
- Concussions occur most frequently in football, but girl's lacrosse, girl's soccer, boy's lacrosse, wrestling and girl's basketball follow closely behind. All athletes are at risk.
- A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain.
- Concussion symptoms may last from a few days to several months.
- Concussions can cause symptoms which interfere with school, work, and social life.
- An athlete should not return to sports while still having symptoms from a concussion as they are at risk for prolonging symptoms and further injury.
- A concussion may cause multiple symptoms. Many symptoms appear immediately after the injury, while others may develop over the next several days or weeks. The symptoms may be subtle and are often difficult to fully recognize.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS, FRIENDS, TEACHERS OR COACHES	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache
Is confused about what to do	Nausea
Forgets plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or fuzzy vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light or noise
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish
Loses consciousness	Feeling foggy or groggy
Shows behavior or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit	

What should I do if I think my child has had a concussion?

If an athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he or she must be immediately removed from play, be it a game or practice. Continuing to participate in physical activity after a concussion can lead to worsening concussion symptoms, increased risk for further injury, and even death. Parents and coaches are not expected to be able to "diagnose" a concussion, as that is the job of a medical professional. However, you must be aware of the signs and symptoms of a concussion and if you are suspicious, then your child must stop playing.

When in doubt, sit them out!

All athletes who sustain a concussion need to be evaluated by a health care professional who is familiar with sports concussions. You should call your child's physician and explain what has happened and follow your physician's instructions. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions he or she should be taken to the emergency department immediately.

When can an athlete return to play following a concussion?

After suffering a concussion, **no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day**. Previously, athletes were allowed to return to play if their symptoms resolved within 15 minutes of the injury. Studies have shown us that the young brain does not recover quickly enough for an athlete to return to activity in such a short time.

Concerns over athletes returning to play too quickly have led state lawmakers in both Oregon and Washington to pass laws stating that **no player shall return to play following a concussion on that same day and the athlete must be cleared by an appropriate health-care professional before he or she are allowed to return to play in games or practices.** The laws also mandate that coaches receive education on recognizing the signs and symptoms of concussion.

Once an athlete no longer has symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to play by health care professional knowledgeable in the care of sports concussions he or she should proceed with activity in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exertion. On average the athlete will complete a new step each day. The return to play schedule should proceed as below following medical clearance:

Step 1: Light exercise, including walking or riding an exercise bike. No weight-lifting.
Step 2: Running in the gym or on the field. No helmet or other equipment.
Step 3: Non-contact training drills in full equipment. Weight-training can begin.
Step 4: Full contact practice or training.
Step 5: Game play.

If symptoms occur at any step, the athlete should cease activity and be re-evaluated by their health care provider.

How can a concussion affect schoolwork?

Following a concussion, many athletes will have difficulty in school. These problems may last from days to months and often involve difficulties with short and long-term memory, concentration, and organization.

In many cases it is best to lessen the athlete's class load early on after the injury. This may include staying home from school for a few days, followed by a lightened schedule for a few days, or perhaps a longer period of time, if needed. Decreasing the stress on the brain early on after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten the recovery time.

What can I do?

- Both you and your child should learn to recognize the "Signs and Symptoms" of concussion as listed above.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she experiences such symptoms.
- Emphasize to administrators, coaches, teachers, and other parents your concerns and expectations about concussion and safe play.
- Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if he or she suspects that a teammate has a concussion.
- Monitor sports equipment for safety, fit, and maintenance.
- Ask teachers to monitor any decrease in grades or changes in behavior that could indicate concussion.
- Report concussions that occurred during the school year to appropriate school staff. This will help in monitoring injured athletes as they move to the next season's sports.

Other Frequently Asked Questions

Why is it so important that an athlete not return to play until they have completely recovered from a concussion?

Athletes who are not fully recovered from an initial concussion are significantly vulnerable for recurrent, cumulative, and even catastrophic consequences of a second concussive injury. Such difficulties are prevented if the athlete is allowed time to recover from the concussion and return to play decisions are carefully made. No athlete should return-to-sport or other at-risk participation when symptoms of concussion are present and recovery is ongoing.

Is a "CAT scan" or MRI needed to diagnose a concussion?

Diagnostic testing, which includes CT ("CAT") and MRI scans, are rarely needed following a concussion. While these are helpful in identifying life-threatening brain injuries (e.g. skull fracture, bleeding, swelling), they are not normally utilized, even by athletes who have sustained severe concussions. A concussion is diagnosed based upon the athlete's story of the injury and the health care provider's physical examination.

What is the best treatment to help my child recover more quickly from a concussion?

The best treatment for a concussion is rest. There are no medications that can speed the recovery from a concussion. Exposure to loud noises, bright lights, computers, video games, television and phones (including text messaging) all may worsen the symptoms of a concussion. You should allow your child to rest as much as possible in the days following a concussion. As the symptoms

lessen, you can allow increased use of computers, phone, video games, etc., but the access must be lessened if symptoms worsen

How long do the symptoms of a concussion usually last?

The symptoms of a concussion will usually go away within one week of the initial injury. You should anticipate that your child will likely be out of sports for about two weeks following a concussion. However, in some cases symptoms may last for several weeks, or even months. Symptoms such as headache, memory problems, poor concentration, and mood changes can interfere with school, work, and social interactions. The potential for such long-term symptoms indicates the need for careful management of all concussions.

How many concussions can an athlete have before he or she should stop playing sports?

There is no "magic number" of concussions that determine when an athlete should give up playing contact or collision sports. The circumstances surrounding each individual injury, such as how the injury happened and length of symptoms following the concussion, are very important and must be considered when assessing an athlete's risk for further and potentially more serious concussions. The decision to "retire" from sports is a decision best reached following a complete evaluation by your child's primary care provider and consultation with a physician or neuropsychologist who specializes in treating sports concussion.

I've read recently that concussions may cause long-term brain damage in professional football players. Is this a risk for high school athletes who have had a concussion?

The issue of "chronic encephalopathy" in several former NFL players has received a great deal of media attention lately. Very little is known about what may be causing dramatic abnormalities in the brains of these unfortunate retired football players. At this time we have very little knowledge of the long-term effects of concussions which happen during high school athletics.

In the cases of the retired NFL players, it appears that most had long careers in the NFL after playing in high school and college. In most cases, they played football for over 20 years and suffered multiple concussions in addition to hundreds of other blows to their heads. Alcohol and steroid use may also be contributing factors in some cases. Obviously, the average high school athlete does not come close to suffering the total number or shear force of head trauma seen by professional football players. However, the fact that we know very little about the long-term effects of concussions in young athletes is further reason to very carefully manage each concussion.

Some of this information has been adapted from the CDC's "Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports" materials by the NFHS's Sports Medicine Advisory Committee. Please go to [illegible] for more information.

If you have any further questions regarding concussions in high school athletes or want to know how to find a concussion specialist in your area please contact Michael C. Koester, MD, ATC and Chair of the NFHS Sports Medicine Advisory Committee at michael.koester@stocumcenter.com

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