

Gfeller-Waller NCHSAA School & Athletic Personnel Concussion Information Sheet

What is a concussion? A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in loss of consciousness. It can occur from a fall, a blow to the head, or a blow to the body that causes the head and the brain to move quickly back and forth.

How do I recognize a concussion? There are many signs and symptoms a person may experience following concussion that can affect their thinking, emotions or mood, physical abilities, or sleep.

| Thinking/Remembering | Physical | Emotional/Mood | Sleep |
|----------------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Difficulty thinking clearly | Headache | Irritability | Sleeping more than usual |
| Feeling slowed down | Fuzzy or blurry vision | Sadness | Sleeping less than usual |
| Difficulty concentrating | Nausea/Vomiting | More emotional than normal | Trouble falling asleep |
| Difficulty remembering new information | Dizziness | Feeling nervous or anxious | |
| | Balance problems | Crying more | |
| | Sensitivity to noise or light | | |

Table from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>)

What should I do if I think a student-athlete has sustained a concussion? If you suspect a student-athlete is experiencing any of the signs and symptoms listed above, you immediately remove them from participation, let their parents know, and/or refer them to the appropriate medical personnel.

What are the warning signs that a more significant head injury may have occurred? If they have a headache that gets worse over time, experience loss of coordination or abnormal body movements, have repeated nausea, vomiting, slurred speech, or you witness what you believe to be a severe head impact, you should refer them to appropriate medical personnel immediately.

What are some of the long-term or cumulative issues that may result from a concussion? Individuals may have trouble in some of their classes at school or even with activities at home. Down the road, especially if their injury is not managed properly, or if they return to play too early, they may experience issues such as being depressed, not feeling well, or have trouble remembering things for a long time. Once an individual has a concussion, they are also more likely to sustain another concussion.

How do I know when it's ok for a student-athlete to return to participation after a suspected concussion? Any student-athlete experiencing signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion should be immediately removed from play or practice and referred to appropriate medical personnel. They should not be returned to play or practice on the same day. To return to play or practice, they will need written clearance from a medical professional trained

No athlete should be returned to play or practice while experiencing any concussion-related signs or symptoms following rest or activity.

in concussion management.

This information is provided to you by the UNC Matthew Gfeller Sport-Related TBI Research Center, North Carolina Medical Society, North Carolina Athletic Trainers' Association, Brain Injury Association of North Carolina, North Carolina Neuropsychological Society, and North Carolina High School Athletic Association.