

OCONEE COUNTY PARKS AND RECREATION DEPARTMENT

Parent Information – Suspected Concussion

Concussions

Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth, changing the way the brain normally works.

Concussion Information

- Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.
- Signs and symptoms can show up right after the injury or may not appear until days or weeks later.
- If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. Rest is key in recovering.
- While an athlete's brain is still healing, s/he is much more likely to have another concussion.
- Athletes who have, at any point in their lives, had a concussion have an increased risk for another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover.
- Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.
- Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.
- In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage or can even be fatal.

Concussion Signs and Symptoms

SIGNS OBSERVED BY STAFF/COACH/PARENT	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache or "pressure" in head
Is confused about assignment or position	Nausea or vomiting
Forgets an instruction or play	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or blurry vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light
Answers questions slowly	Sensitivity to noise
Loses consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall	Confusion
Can't recall events after hit or fall	Just not "feeling right" or "feeling down"

The Following Danger Signs Represent a Medical Emergency

- One pupil is larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to be awakened
- A headache that not only does not diminish, but gets worse
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Inability to recognize people or places
- Increasingly confused, restless or agitated
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness

Dealing with a Suspected Concussion

1. Remove your child from play.
2. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury.
3. Seek medical attention. Consult a doctor properly trained to diagnose concussions.
4. Keep the athlete out of play until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says it is okay to return to play.

Steps to Recovery

Rest

Athletes that have sustained a concussion need to get as much rest as possible in the days and weeks following the incident to help the brain recover and heal. Resting includes getting adequate sleep, refraining from physical activities and avoiding cognitive activities such as video games, watching television, board games, schoolwork, etc. Allow daily naps or even breaks from daily activity if your child feels tired.

Monitor

Parents should check for any additional symptoms developing over the days following the incident.

Return to Play

The health care provider should provide recommendations and an action plan for returning to daily life to include school and athletics. Gradual reentry may be needed to include shortened or half days at school, measured return to athletics from light participation to full competition.

Educate Your Athlete

- Discuss with your child a list of symptoms they might experience during an activity as a result of a concussion and stress the importance of reporting a bump or blow to their head to you or a coach, even if they feel fine.
- Teach your child to play by the rules and demonstrate good sportsmanship.
- Ensure your child knows how to wear their protective equipment properly, making sure it fits well and is used every time they play.

O CPRD Concussion Policy

Oconee County Parks and Recreation Department's policy is to remove any child from a department program if it is suspected that the child may have a concussion. Any child removed from play due to a suspected concussion will not be allowed to return to play until the child no longer has any concussion symptoms and written permission from a health care provider trained in concussion management has been received.