

Concussion Information Sheet

This sheet has information to help protect children or teens from concussion or other serious brain injury. This document provides the information on learning how to spot a concussion and what to do if a concussion occurs.

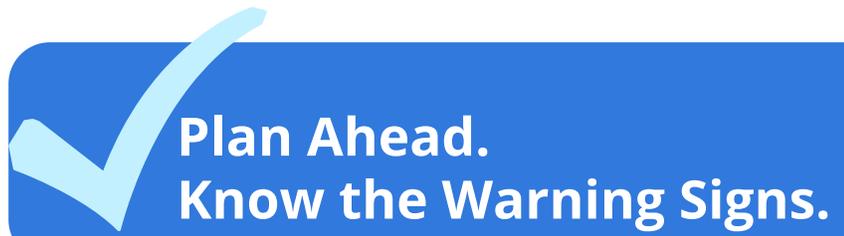
What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This quick movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

What Can I Do?

Sports are a great way for children and teens to stay healthy and can help them do well in school. To help lower children's or teens' chances of getting a concussion or other serious brain injury, you should:

- Help create a culture of safety for the team.
- Teach ways to lower the chances of getting a concussion.
- Talk with children/teens about concussion and ask if they have concerns about reporting a concussion. Talk with them about their concerns; emphasize the importance of reporting concussions and taking time to recover if one occurs.
- Ensure that they follow the rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Tell children or teens that you expect them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Depending on the sport or activity, children or teens must wear a helmet to lower the chances of the most serious types of brain or head injury. However, there is no "concussion-proof" helmet. So, even with a helmet, it's important for children and teens to avoid hits to the head.



What Are the Warning Signs?

Children and teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below—or simply say they just “don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body—may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

Signs observed by parents, staff, or coaches

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

Signs observed by parents, staff, or coaches

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Confusion, concentration or memory problems
- Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down”



To learn more, go to [cdc.gov/HEADSUP](https://www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP)

While most children and teens with a concussion feel better within a couple of weeks, some will have symptoms for months or longer. Talk with your children's or teens' healthcare provider if their concussion symptoms do not go away, or if they get worse after they return to their regular activities.

What Are Serious Signs of Danger?

In rare cases, a dangerous collection of blood (hematoma) may form on the brain after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body and can squeeze the brain against the skull. Call 9-1-1 or take the child or teen to the emergency room right away if, after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, he or she has one or more of these danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Drowsiness or inability to wake up
- A headache that gets worse and does not go away
- Slurred speech, weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea, convulsions or seizures (shaking or twitching)
- Unusual behavior, increased confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out). Even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously

Parents:

Talk with your children/teens about concussions. Tell them to report their concussion symptoms to you and staff or coach right away. Some children/teens think concussions aren't serious, or worry that if they report a concussion they will lose their ability to participate or look weak. It's important for their longterm health and safety to understand the signs and take proper care as instructed by their health care provider.

What To Do If You Suspect A Concussion?

If you think a child or teen may have a concussion, you should:

1. Remove the child or teen from play.
2. Keep child/teen out of play the day of the injury. The child or teen should be seen by a healthcare provider and only return to play with permission from a healthcare provider who is experienced in evaluating for concussion.
3. Parents should ask the child's or teen's healthcare provider for written instructions on helping the child or teen return to school. These return-to-play instructions should be given to the staff or coach.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a healthcare provider should assess a child or teen for a possible concussion. Concussion signs and symptoms often show up soon after the injury. But you may not know how serious the concussion is at first, and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. The brain needs time to heal after a concussion. A child's or teen's return to school and sports should be a gradual process that is carefully managed and monitored by a healthcare provider.

Children and teens who continue to play while having concussion symptoms, or who return to play too soon—while the brain is still healing—have a greater chance of getting another concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs while the brain is still healing from the first injury can be very serious, and can affect a child or teen for a lifetime. It can even be fatal.