



SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF CONCUSSION

Concussions can appear in many different ways. Listed below are some of the signs and symptoms frequently associated with concussions. Most signs, symptoms and abnormalities after a concussion fall into the four categories listed below. A coach, parent or other person who knows the athlete well can often detect these problems by observing the athlete and/or by asking a few relevant questions of the athlete, official or a teammate who was on the field or court at the time of the concussion. Below are some suggested observations and questions a non-medical individual can use to help determine whether an athlete has suffered a concussion, and how urgently he or she should be sent for appropriate medical care.

1. PROBLEMS IN BRAIN FUNCTION:

- a. **Confused state** – dazed look, vacant stare or confusion about what happened or is happening.
- b. **Memory problems** – can't remember assignment on play, opponent, score of game, or period of the game; can't remember how or with whom he or she traveled to the game, what he or she was wearing, what was eaten for breakfast, etc.
- c. **Symptoms reported by athlete** – Headache, nausea or vomiting; blurred or double vision; oversensitivity to sound, light or touch; ringing in ears; feeling foggy or groggy; dizziness.
- d. **Lack of sustained attention** – difficulty sustaining focus adequately to complete a task, a coherent thought or a conversation.

2. SPEED OF BRAIN FUNCTION:

Slow response to questions, slow slurred speech, incoherent speech, slow body movements and slow reaction time.

3. UNUSUAL BEHAVIORS:

Behaving in a combative, aggressive or very silly manner; atypical behavior for the individual; repeatedly asking the same question over and over; restless, and irritable behavior with constant motion and attempts to return to play; reactions that seem out of proportion and inappropriate; and having trouble resting or "finding a comfortable position."

4. PROBLEMS WITH BALANCE AND COORDINATION:

Dizziness, slow clumsy movements, inability to walk a straight line or balance on one foot with eyes closed.

IF NO MEDICAL PERSONNEL ARE ON HAND AND AN INJURED ATHLETE HAS ANY OF THE ABOVE SYMPTOMS, HE OR SHE SHOULD BE SENT FOR APPROPRIATE MEDICAL CARE.

CONCUSSION PROTOCOL

The presences of any of the signs or symptoms that are listed above suggest a concussion has most likely occurred. In addition to observation and direct questioning for symptoms from a medical professional. Athletes must be medically cleared before they can play again.