



EASTSIDE CATHOLIC CONCUSSION INFORMATION & PROTOCOL

A concussion is a brain injury, and all concussions are serious. Concussions can occur without a loss of consciousness. Concussions are caused by a blow to the head or to the body that is transmitted to the head. Signs & symptoms of a concussion may develop immediately, or even hours after the impact.

The following signs may be observed:

- Loss of consciousness
- Appears dazed or confused
- Is confused about their assignment
- Forgets plays
- Moves clumsily, balance problems
- Answers questions slowly
- Can't recall events prior to the hit
- Can't recall events after the hit
- Shows behavior or personality changes

The following symptoms may be reported by the athlete:

- Headache or "pressure in the head"
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, "out of it", or "not right"
- Feeling drowsy
- Difficulty focusing, concentrating, or remembering
- Confusion
- Sleep issues

According to the Zackery Lystedt Law "a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time". "They may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider".

An athlete suspected of having a concussion will be removed from play and must be evaluated by the certified athletic trainer or a qualified health care provider ASAP. The athlete should not be left unsupervised and should not drive home.

Concussion symptoms can last for hours, days, or even weeks. The athlete must rest from PHYSICAL & COGNITIVE activity until they are completely symptom free. Physical or cognitive activity during that time could prolong recovery and put them at risk for another impact to the head. Watching TV, video games, computer work, texting, listening to loud music, and school work can increase or prolong symptoms and should be avoided until symptoms resolve.

In order to return to play:



- The athlete must be completely symptom-free for 24 hours
- All cognitive & neurological evaluations are passed or back to baseline levels
- Must complete 5 step return to play progression with no symptoms returning (Must have at least 24 hours between each step, and can only complete 1 step per day).
 - Step 1- Light Aerobic Exercise
 - Step 2- Sport Specific Exercise
 - Step 3- Non-Contact Training Drills
 - Step 4- Full Contact Practice
 - Step 5- Clearance for Return to Play
- Once a concussion is diagnosed, do not expect return to play for at least 7 days.
- A gradual return to play is critical to ensure the athlete is completely recovered before returning to play
- Final clearance for return to athletic participation is determined by the ATC
- Every concussion is different, therefore each concussion will be managed on an individual basis

We take concussions very seriously because we are dealing with developing brains. The health & safety of the athletes is always the main priority.

The risks of returning to play before full recovery are:

- Second Impact Syndrome: another impact to the brain before recovery from prior brain injury
 - Very rare, but can cause permanent brain damage or even death
- Cumulative Brain Trauma
- Multiple Concussions: risk of sustaining another concussion increases with each concussion
- Longer Recovery Period
- Post-Concussion Syndrome: concussion-like symptoms that can last weeks to months

ImPACT Testing (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing)

ImPACT provides computerized neurocognitive assessment tools that are used by physicians, psychologists, athletic trainers, and other licensed healthcare professionals to assist them in determining an athlete's ability to return to play after suffering a concussion.

It is NOT used as a stand-alone tool to diagnose or clear athletes from concussions.

Athletes participating in the following sports are tested pre-season for baseline scores: Football, Volleyball, Soccer, Basketball, Wrestling, Lacrosse

If an athlete sustains a concussion, they will take ImPACT again when they are symptom-free. These scores will be sent to the neuropsychologist at Harborview and compared to baseline scores.

We are always looking in to ways to improve our concussion protocol with better baseline testing, on field evaluations, and recovery options.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

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