

Green Bay Area Public Schools Concussion Information



What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even what seems to be a mild bump to the head can be serious. Concussions can occur during practices or games in any sport or recreational activity.

COMMON SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION:

Signs a student-athlete should report

- Thinking/Remembering:
 - Difficulty thinking clearly
 - Difficulty concentrating or remembering
 - Feeling more slowed down
 - Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Physical:
 - Headache or “pressure” in head
 - Nausea or vomiting
 - Balance problems or dizziness
 - Fatigue or feeling tired
 - Blurry or double vision
 - Sensitivity to light or noise
 - Numbness or tingling
 - Does not “feel right”
- Emotional:
 - Irritable
 - Sad
 - More emotional than usual
 - Nervous
- Changes in your normal sleep patterns.

Signs observed by a parent or peer - Tell someone if you observe a student-athlete with any of these symptoms:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets sports plays
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Repeats questions
- Can't recall events prior to the hit, bump, or fall
- Can't recall events after the hit, bump, or fall
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes

Students with a suspected concussion should NEVER return to sports or recreation activities on the same day the injury occurred. They should delay returning to their activities until a health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussion says they are symptom-free and provide written clearance to return to activity. This means, until permitted, not returning to:

- Physical Education (PE) class
- Sports conditioning
- Weight lifting
- Practices and games
- Physical activity at recess

Student-Athletes!

It is important to note... unlike a broken arm, you can't see a concussion. Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury. It is important to watch for changes in how you are feeling, if symptoms are getting worse, or if you just “don't feel right.” If you think you or a teammate may have a concussion, it is important to tell someone.

For more information about concussions, go to:

www.cdc.gov/Concussion; www.wiaawi.org; www.nfhs.org

Student-Athletes

Parent/Guardian(s)

Steps a student-athlete should complete if they have any symptoms listed above

Steps a parent/guardian should complete if their child has a concussion

- Tell your coaches and parents right away. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. If you experience symptoms of a concussion, you should immediately remove yourself from practice/play. Tell your coach right away if you think you or one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- Get evaluated by a health care provider. A health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussion can determine if you have a concussion, help guide management and safe return to normal activities, including school (concentration and learning) and physical activity. If you have been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a suspected or confirmed concussion, you may not participate again until evaluated by a health care provider and receive written clearance to return to activity. You must provide this written clearance to your coach.
- Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a repeat concussion. It is important to rest until you receive written clearance from a health care provider to return to practice and play.

- Seek medical attention right away. A health care provider experienced in evaluating for concussions can direct concussion management and review when it is safe for your child to return to normal activities, including school (concentration and learning) and physical activity. If your child or teen has been removed from a youth athletic activity because of a suspected or confirmed concussion or head injury, they may not participate again until he/she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives written clearance to participate in the activity from the health care provider.
- Help them take time to get better. If your child or teen has a concussion, her or his brain needs time to heal. Your child or teen should limit activities while he/she is recovering from a concussion. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, using a computer, texting, or playing video games may worsen or prolong concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness). Rest will help your child recover more quickly. Your child may become upset that he/she cannot participate in activities.
- Together with your child, learn more about concussions. Talk about the potential long-term effects of concussion and the problems caused by returning too soon to daily activities too quickly (especially physical activity and learning/concentration).

Why you should tell someone about your symptoms:

Your chances of sustaining a life altering injury are greatly increased if you aren't fully recovered from a concussion.

Practicing/playing with concussion symptoms can prolong your recovery.

Practicing/playing with a concussion can increase your chances of getting another concussion.

Telling someone could save your life or the life of a teammate!

Danger signs for a parent/guardian to be aware of:

Be alert for symptoms that worsen over time. Your child or teen should be seen in an emergency department right away if he/she has:

- One pupil (the black part in the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Difficult to arouse
- Severe headache or worsening headache
- Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Slurred speech convulsions or seizures
- Difficulty recognizing people or places
- Increasing confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness (even a brief loss of consciousness should be taken seriously)

Steps to take at school following a concussion:

Tell your teachers if you have suffered a concussion or head injury. Concussions often impair school performance. In order to properly rest, many students often need to miss a few days of school immediately following a concussion.

Students who return to school after a concussion may need to:

- Take rest breaks as need
- Spend fewer hours at school
- Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments
- Receive help with schoolwork
- Reduce time spent reading, writing, or on the computer

Steps for a parent/guardian to take when their child returns to school following a concussion:

Help your child or teen get needed support when returning to school after a concussion. Talk with your child's school administrators, teachers, school nurse, coach, and counselor about your child's concussion and symptoms. Your child may feel frustrated, sad, and even angry because he/she cannot keep up with schoolwork and learn as well after a concussion. Your child may also feel isolated from peers and social networks. Talk often with your child about these issues and offer your support and encouragement. As your child's symptoms decrease, the extra help or support can be removed gradually.