



Santa Cruz City Schools  
133 Mission Street, Ste. 100  
Santa Cruz, CA 95060  
(831) 429-3410

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## CONCUSSION INFORMATION SHEET

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

### ***Symptoms May Include One or More of the following:***

Headaches; Amnesia; "Pressure in Head"; "Don't Feel Right"; Sadness; Nausea; Vomiting; Neck Pain; Fatigue or Low Energy; Irritability; Balance Problems; Dizziness; Nervousness/Anxiety; Blurred or Double Vision; Fuzzy Vision; Sensitivity to Light; Emotional Sensitivity to Noise Confusion; Groggy / Fuzzy; Drowsiness; Concentration Issues; Forgetfulness; Change in Sleep Patterns; Repeating Questions; Repeating Comments

### ***Signs Observed By Teammates, Parents and Coaches May Include:***

Appears Dazed; Vacant Facial Expressions; Confused about Assignments; Forgets Plays; Unsure of Game, Score, Unsure of Opponent; Moves Clumsily; Coordination Issues ;Answers Questions Slowly; Slurred Speech; Behavior Changes Personality; Changes Unsure of Previous Events; Unsure of Events after Incident; Seizures / Convulsions; Loss of Consciousness.

### ***What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns to soon?***

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

### ***If you think your child has suffered a concussion:***

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The new CIF Bylaw 313 now requires implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:

### ***CIF Bylaw 313. Concussion Protocol:***



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A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time for the remainder of the day. A student-athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussion and receives written clearance to return to play from that health care provider. (Approved May 2010 Federated Council)

***Definition of Health Care Provider:***

The "scope of practice" for licensed health care providers and medical professionals is defined by California state statutes. This scope of practice will limit the evaluation to a medical doctor (MD) or doctor of osteopathy (DO). You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out. For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports>