

# CONCUSSION POLICY

## PURPOSE

Greenfield Area Soccer Club recognizes the potential danger and long-term health consequences of this often difficult to diagnose form of traumatic brain injury. The policy is intended to provide easy-to-understand guidelines related to players who have been diagnosed with or are suspected of having a concussion. The policy is for coaches, parents, and players, but is to be shared with any other adults or participants in Greenfield Area Soccer Club. At GASC, we want to ensure our players are provided the safest environment possible. As such, GASC is incorporating a Concussion Policy to educate GASC members about concussions, help prevent concussions from occurring, and identify when a concussion may have taken place

Per Indiana Senate Law, youth coaches need to be educated about concussions. It is **mandatory** for all recreational and competitive coaches to have completed a concussion training module and have a certificate of completion on file to be updated every two years.

Here are the guidelines GASC encourages coaches, players, and families to follow:

- **Learn about concussions!** The athlete, family, and coach should be familiar with the signs and symptoms of a concussion.
- **Identify the signs and symptoms of a concussion.** As a member of the sports community; we must recognize the signs of a concussion and check to see if the player is experiencing symptoms of a concussion.
- **'When in doubt, take the player out.'** It is best practice to remove the player from competition if there are signs and/or symptoms a concussion has occurred.
- **Do not let the player return.** The player should not return to competition until he or she is evaluated by a medical physician and cleared to play.
- **Monitor player recovery.** Players who have experienced a concussion should be allowed to return to participate on a gradual basis. Players should continue to be monitored with the goal that the player will eventually return to full participation at an individual pace. Not all concussions are the same.

## CONCUSSION PROCEDURE AND PROTOCOL

Concussion: a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. Medically, a concussion is a complex, pathophysiological event to the brain that is induced by trauma which may or may not involve a loss of consciousness (LOC).

Concussion results in a constellation of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep-related symptoms. Signs or symptoms may last from several minutes to days, weeks, months or even longer in some cases.

## CONCUSSION SIGNS, SYMPTOMS, AND MANAGEMENT AT TRAINING AND COMPETITIONS

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#### STEP 1: DID A CONCUSSION OCCUR?

Evaluate the player and note if any of the following signs and/or symptoms are present:

- (1) Dazed look or confusion about what happened.
- (2) Memory difficulties.
- (3) Neck pain, headaches, nausea, vomiting, double vision, blurriness, ringing noise or sensitive to sounds.
- (4) Short attention span. Can't keep focused.
- (5) Slow reaction time, slurred speech, bodily movements are lagging, fatigue, and slowly answers questions or has difficulty answering questions.
- (6) Abnormal physical and/or mental behavior.
- (7) Coordination skills are behind, ex: balancing, dizziness, clumsiness, reaction time.

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#### STEP 2: IS EMERGENCY TREATMENT NEEDED?

This would include the following scenarios:

- (1) Spine or neck injury or pain.
- (2) Behavior patterns change, unable to recognize people/places, less responsive than usual.
- (3) Loss of consciousness.
- (4) Headaches that worsen
- (5) Seizures
- (6) Very drowsy, can't be awakened
- (7) Repeated vomiting
- (8) Increasing confusion or irritability
- (9) Weakness, numbness in arms and legs

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#### STEP 3: IF A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION OCCURRED, BUT NO EMERGENCY TREATMENT IS NEEDED, WHAT SHOULD BE DONE NOW?

Focus on these areas every 5-10 min for the next 1 - 2 hours, without returning to any activities:

- (1) Balance, movement.
- (2) Speech.
- (3) Memory, instructions, and responses.
- (4) Attention on topics, details, confusion, ability to concentrate.
- (5) State of consciousness
- (6) Mood, behavior, and personality
- (7) Headache or "pressure" in head
- (8) Nausea or vomiting
- (9) Sensitivity to light and noise

Players shall not re-enter competition, training, or partake in any activities for at least 24 hours. Even if there are no signs or symptoms after 15-20 min, activity should not be taken by the player.

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#### STEP 4: A PLAYER DIAGNOSED WITH A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION

A player diagnosed with a possible concussion may return to GASC play only after release from a medical doctor or doctor of osteopathy specializing in concussion treatment and management.

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**STEP 5: IF THERE IS A POSSIBILITY OF A CONCUSSION, DO THE FOLLOWING:**

- (1) The attached Concussion Notification Form is to be filled out in duplicate and signed by a team official of the player's team.
- (2) ) If the player is able to do so, have the player sign and date the Form. If the player is not able to sign, note on the player's signature line "unavailable".
- (3) (3) If a parent/legal guardian of the player is present, have the parent/legal guardian sign and date the Form, and give the parent/legal guardian one of the copies of the completed Form. If the parent/legal guardian is not present, then the team official is responsible for notifying the parent/legal guardian ASAP by phone or email and then submitting the Form to the parent/legal guardian by email or mail. When the parent/legal guardian is not present, the team official must make a record of how and when the parent/legal guardian was notified. The notification will include a request for the parent/legal guardian to provide confirmation and completion of the Concussion Notification Form whether in writing or electronically.
- (4) The team official must also get the player's pass from the referee, and attach it to the copy of the Form retained by the team.