

## Concussion Fact Sheet for Parents & Athletes

### What is a concussion?

- A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) that interrupts normal brain function. A concussion occurs when there is a direct or indirect force to the head and often does not occur with a loss of consciousness. These injuries can lead to a wide range of issues, including academic difficulty, loss of playing time and in severe cases, permanent brain damage or retirement from athletic play.

### What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

- Signs and symptoms may include, but are not limited to:

#### **Reported by Athlete:**

- Headache
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, foggy, or groggy
- Confusion, concentration, or memory problems

#### **Observed by Others:**

- Confusion about assignment, forgets plays, unsure of game, score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Loses consciousness
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Appears to be dazed or stunned
- Cannot recall events prior to or after incident

### What to do once a concussion has been diagnosed?

- If a concussion is suspected, the athlete is not permitted to return to activity the same day. The athlete must rest physically, *and* mentally. If a concussion is diagnosed or suspected, the patient should refrain from taking any pharmacological agent that may mask the underlying symptoms (e.g. headache), unless directed by physician.

***\*It is imperative that the athlete implements "brain rest";*** actions such as those listed below may exacerbate the symptoms and delay recovery. Any action that increases symptoms should be discontinued.

#### **Athlete Should Limit:**

- |  |             |               |
|--|-------------|---------------|
| -Watching television / movies                        | -Exercising | -Social Media |
| -Use of cell phone (texting, playing games)/Computer | -Reading    | -Studying     |

### When should my child return to school/work/activity?

- Sometimes symptoms may worsen while trying to concentrate at school and/or work. Any activity that increases symptoms should be discontinued until symptoms resolve. If schoolwork is causing or exacerbating symptoms, a discussion may be warranted between parents/guardian, physician, and school/work personnel to decrease workload until resolution of symptoms.
- The athlete shall remain at rest until they are asymptomatic. Once the athlete is asymptomatic at rest, they must follow up with a doctor of medicine (M.D.), doctor of osteopathy (D.O.), or a licensed athletic trainer before getting clearance to begin a gradual return to play (RTP) with an appropriate medical professional.
- Final written clearance from the medical professional shall be obtained before the athlete engages in any unrestricted or full contact activity.

### What if symptoms worsen?

- If the athlete begins to experience any significant worsening of the following symptoms after a concussion, they should be immediately taken to the hospital:
  - Worsening headache, not waking up, repeated vomiting, seizures, numbness/weakness in extremities, increased confusion, or difficulty walking

