

Concussions: Parents' and Coaches' Information Sheet

Concussion Facts:

1. A concussion is a brain injury or trauma caused by a hit or a blow to the head/body, or contact with the ground, ball or another player.
2. Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness.
3. The severity of injury will depend on many different factors and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal.
4. All concussions are not created equal. Every player is different; every injury is different.
5. After a concussion or head injury is suspected, the injured player **MUST** leave practice or the field of play immediately and may not return, until after being cleared by a duly-licensed medical or osteopathic physician.

Symptoms and signs of a possible concussion in youth soccer players include:

1. Headaches
2. Blurry, fuzzy or double vision
3. Sensitivity to light and/or noise
4. Concentration problems or memory loss
5. Feeling sluggish
6. Slurred speech
7. Balance and dexterity problems or dizziness
8. Vomiting or weak stomach
9. General confusion
10. Slow reaction time
11. Difficulty concentrating
12. Irritability
13. Sleep disturbances
14. Loss of consciousness

Return To Play/Practice Procedure:

1. If a player is suspected of having a concussion, seek medical attention immediately.
2. Youth players **MUST** be kept out of all athletic activities, including practice, when a concussion or head injury is either suspected or diagnosed.
3. While the brain is healing from a trauma, athletes are significantly more likely to receive a second concussion if they begin athletic activity too soon.
4. Keep possibly concussed athletes away from any cognitive activities that require concentration or intense focus.
5. Activities such as computer work, lengthy TV watching and playing video games should be avoided.
6. Do not give any medication to an athlete who is suspected of having a concussion unless it was previously prescribed or authorized by a physician after the trauma.
7. The injured player **MAY NOT** return to training or game activity until after an SAY Return to Play Form completed and signed a duly-licensed medical or osteopathic physician is received by the PAL president, who will in turn ensure the player's coach is notified.