



ROCKY MOUNTAIN YOUTH FOOTBALL LEAGUE CONCUSSION & TRAUMATIC BRAIN INJURY POLICY

Effective May 10, 2011, a Utah law called the “The Protection of Athletes with Head Injuries Act” (UCA § 26-53-101, et seq.), requires all amateur sports organizations to adopt and enforce a concussion head injury policy. This policy will ensure the consistent and uniform implementation of a well-established concussion management program and return-to-play guidelines for the Rocky Mountain Youth Football League.

Education

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 functions.

All concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and even death if not recognized and managed properly.

In other words, even a “ding” or a bump to the head can be serious. Concussion cannot be physically seen, and most occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms may appear immediately after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If an athlete reports any signs or symptoms of concussion, or is observed expressing signs or symptoms of a concussion, seek medical attention immediately.

Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion

Signs

- *Appears dazed*
- *Vacant facial expression*
- *Moves clumsily or displays incoordination*
- *Answers questions slowly*
- *Slurred speech*
- *Seizures or convulsions*
- *Loss of consciousness*

Symptoms

- Headaches
- “Pressure in head”
- Nausea or vomiting
- *Ringing in the ears*
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- *Drowsiness*
- *Change in sleep patterns*
- Amnesia
- “Don’t feel right”
- *Fatigue or low energy*
- *Sadness*
- *Nervousness or anxiety*
- *Irritability*
- *More emotional or irritable*
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems
- *Repeating the same question/comment*

What to do if someone is suspected to have sustained a concussion:

- Notify a coach, parent/legal guardian, responsible adult if it is suspected someone is experiencing signs or symptoms of a concussion. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head.
- If a concussion is suspected, then an evaluation by a medical professional is required. A qualified health care provider can diagnose a concussion and advise when following return-to-play guidelines is warranted.
- Rest! Players suffering from a concussion need time to allow the brain to heal properly. Young developing brains recovering from a current concussion are susceptible to sustaining a second concussion known as Second Impact Syndrome. This condition can cause permanent brain damage, or even death. It is important to rest until approval from a doctor or qualified health care provider is given before fully returning to activity.
- Do not take anti-inflammatory medications such as Ibuprofen, Advil, Aleve, or Motrin without the approval from a doctor. These medications thin the blood, and can possibly cause more damage to a brain that has sustained a concussion.

Possible consequences for returning a player to the field from a concussion too soon:

- Athletes with the signs and symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. As quoted from the Center for Disease Control (CDC), "A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first - usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks) - can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussion can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death. This more serious condition is called second impact syndrome. Keep athletes with a known or suspected concussion from play until they have been evaluated and given permission to return to play by a qualified health care provider with experience in evaluating for concussion.
Remember: 'It's better to miss one game than the whole season.'"

Concussion Policy Action Plan

Rocky Mountain Youth Football:

- Rocky Mountain Youth Football League (RMYFL) is defined as:
 - RMYFL paid and volunteer administrative staff.
 - All registered RMYFL players.
 - All registered RMYFL coaches.
 - Any other RMYFL participant.

Education and Notification Requirements:

- RMYFL adopts these education and notification policies for the management of concussions in youth football.
 - All coaches (paid and volunteer) must be educated in the nature and risk of concussions prior to the first practice/competition. This education shall include signs and symptoms of concussions.
 - All players and the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of those players are required to sign and return every season an informed consent form relating to the nature and risk of concussions. This shall include the review of the RMYFL Concussion Policy which includes the signs and symptoms of concussions, and the RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form.
 - The RMYFL Concussion Policy and RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form can be found on the RMYFL website under Player Safety subcategory Concussion Policy.

Action Plan for Head Injuries:

- RMYFL has adopted these policies for the management of concussions in youth football.

- Any player showing signs or symptoms of a concussion shall be immediately removed from participation/competition.
- All RMYFL players sustaining or suspected of sustaining a traumatic brain injury **MUST** use the RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form in order to return to play.
- RMYFL will not allow any athlete who has sustained or is suspected of sustaining a traumatic brain injury to return to play until RMYFL has received a RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form for that athlete bearing the signature of a Qualified Health Care Provider.
 - A Qualified Health Care Provider is someone who meets the following requirements:
 - Licensed in the state of Utah under the Division of Occupational and Professional **Licensing Act**
 - May evaluate and manage a concussion within the health care provider's scope of practice
 - Successfully completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of a concussion within 3 years.

Appropriate Clearance of Head Injuries:

- RMYFL will follow these guidelines for managing concussions or suspected concussions in youth football.
 - The Qualified Health Care Provider who has cleared the athlete must provide a statement that they are trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
 - Optimally, all athletes should progress through the "Return-To-Play Protocol" (R.T.P.P) on the RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form before returning to play, but athletes may return to play without completing the protocol if indicated on the RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form by a Qualified Health Care Provider.
 - The RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form must be returned to the appropriate administration before final clearance is granted.
 - The Appropriate Administration is the person(s) responsible for the clearance information depending on the event in which they were injured.
 - RMYFL Administrative Staff is administratively responsible for the clearances of head injuries that occur during a RMYFL-hosted event. A RMYFL-hosted event is defined as:
 1. RMYFL finals and championship.
 2. Regular season play.
 - Teams, clubs, and parents are administratively responsible for the clearance of head injuries that occur during a RMYFL non-hosted event. A RMYFL non-hosted event is defined as none of the events listed above as a RMYFL-hosted event, and may include, but are not limited to, the following events:
 1. Practices.
 2. Scrimmages.
 3. Tryouts.
- **Coaches Requirements:**
 - Shall be educated as to the nature and risk of concussions including continuing to play after a concussion or head injury. This education shall include signs and symptoms of concussions. Education materials are available below at no charge.

- Shall educate their athletes on the signs and symptoms of concussions and encourage athletes to notify a coach if they or a teammate exhibits those signs or symptoms.
 - Shall immediately remove any athlete from participation/competition who is suspected of sustaining a concussion.
 - Shall not allow an athlete who, has been removed from play because of a suspected concussion, to return to play until the athlete has received written clearance from a Qualified Health Care Professional trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
 - Shall obtain, from every player and his or her guardian, a copy of the completed informed consent that is available through the CDC.
 - Shall complete training on concussions. At this time, the Tackle certification is the required training for this.
- **Parents/Legal Guardian Requirements:**
 - Shall every season review, sign, and return the informed consent form to the Coaching Team for which their child plays before their child participates in any practice or competition. Their signature acknowledges that they have read, understood, and agreed to abide by the RMYFL Concussion Policy and RMYFL Concussion Clearance Form.
- **Athlete Requirements:**
 - Shall every season review, sign and return to the Coaching Team for which they play, an informed consent form on concussion prior to initiating practice or competition.
 - Shall inform a coach or parent if they, or a teammate, exhibit any signs or symptoms of a concussion.
 - The athlete may not return to play until he or she has been evaluated by and received written clearance to resume participation from a qualified health care provider who is trained in the evaluation and management of a concussion within the health care provider's scope of practice in accordance with this policy.
- **Referee / Official Requirements:**
 - Shall complete required concussion training as set forth by NFHS.
 - Shall fill out a report and turn it into the league anytime there is an injury or suspected concussion.

*For questions about the RMYFL Concussion Policy:

Please contact your regional director.

*For more information regarding sports related concussions, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at:

www.cdc.gov/concussion