

# Concussion Fact Sheet

**What is a concussion?** A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect impact to the head that results in disruption of normal brain function, which may or may not result in loss of consciousness. It can occur from a fall, a blow to the head, or a blow to the body that causes the head and the brain to move quickly back and forth.

**How do I recognize a concussion?** There are many signs and symptoms a person may experience following concussion that can affect their thinking, emotions or mood, physical abilities, or sleep.

Thinking/Remembering	Physical	Emotional/Mood	Sleep
Difficulty thinking clearly	Headache	Irritability	Sleeping more than usual
Feeling slowed down	Burry or painful vision	Sadness	Sleeping less than usual
Difficulty concentrating	Nausea or vomiting	Feeling nervous or anxious	Trouble falling asleep
Difficulty remembering information	Dizziness, trouble with balance	Easily upset, more emotional than normal	Drowsiness
Loss of consciousness (even briefly)	Feeling physically fatigued	Behavior or personality changes	
Confusion	Sensitivity to noise or light		

Table from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>)

## What should I do if I think a youth athlete has sustained a concussion?

If you suspect a youth athlete is experiencing any of the signs and symptoms listed above, immediately remove them from participation, let their parents know, and/or refer them to the appropriate medical personnel.

## What are the warning signs that a more significant head injury may have occurred?

If they have a headache that gets worse over time, experience loss of coordination or abnormal body movements, loss of consciousness, have repeated nausea, vomiting, slurred speech, or you witness what you believe to be a severe head impact, you should refer them to appropriate medical personnel immediately.

## What are some of the long-term or cumulative issues that may result from a concussion?

Individuals may have trouble in some of their classes at school or even with activities at home. Down the road, especially if their injury is not managed properly or if they return to play too early, they may experience issues such as being depressed, not feeling well, or have trouble remembering things for a long time. Once an individual has a concussion, they are also more likely to sustain another concussion and the health consequences of further concussion can be serious or fatal.

## How do I know when it's ok for a youth athlete to return to participation after a suspected concussion?

Any youth athlete experiencing signs and symptoms consistent with a concussion should be immediately removed from play or practice and referred to appropriate medical personnel. They should not be returned to play or practice on the same day. To return to play or practice, they must have written clearance from a medical professional trained in concussion management.

**Please note: No athlete should be returned to play or practice while experiencing any concussion-related signs or symptoms following rest or activity.**