

## North Oaks Sports Medicine Reference Packet for Coaches

### Concussion Information

A concussion is a traumatic injury to the brain that alters mental status or causes other symptoms. Many people assume they do not have a concussion if they have not lost consciousness. However, significant injury can occur without losing consciousness at all. Football players often say “I just got my bell rung” when a blow to the head causes ringing in the ears, but those symptoms are often consistent with concussion.

When concussion is suspected, a trained coach certified athletic trainer (AT), or the team physician should immediately perform an initial “sideline” evaluation, including:

- Symptoms list review
- Focused neurological exam
- Focused orientation exam that tests short-term memory recall such as the event, play, opponent, score or last meal
- Focused orientation exam that tests long term recall such as name, birth date, place of birth
- Assessment of athlete’s ability to stay attentive to a complex task such as reciting months backwards

If left undiagnosed, a concussion may place an athlete at risk of developing **second impact syndrome**—a potentially fatal injury that occurs when an athlete sustains a second head injury before a previous head injury has completely healed.

If you suspect your child has a concussion or for more info on concussions, please **contact North Oaks Sports Medicine** at **(985) 230-5248**, or visit [www.northoaks.org/sportsmedicine](http://www.northoaks.org/sportsmedicine).



## Concussion Information

- LHSAA Concussion Packet:  
[http://lhsaa.org/uploads/forms/pdf/2014\\_Concussion\\_Packet.pdf](http://lhsaa.org/uploads/forms/pdf/2014_Concussion_Packet.pdf)
- NOSM Concussion Protocol (on separate page below)
- **Definition of Concussion:**
  - *A concussion is a traumatic brain injury that interferes with normal brain function. An athlete **DOES NOT** have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion.*
- **How can I tell if someone has a concussion?**
  - Concussions are usually caused by a direct blow to the head.
  - Common symptoms of a Concussion include:
    - Headache
    - Confusion
    - Nausea/Vomiting
    - Dizziness/Poor balance
    - Blurred vision
    - Sensitivity to light/sound
    - Mood changes (irritable/anxious/tearful)
- **What should I do if I suspect that someone has a concussion?**
  - Remove athlete from play immediately
    - Cannot return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.
    - No athlete should return to play or practice on the same day of a concussion.
  - Inform the athlete's parents or guardians
  - If an Athletic Trainer is not at the game/practice, it is the responsibility of the HEAD COACH to make the determination.
  - Any athlete diagnosed with a concussion must be medically cleared by a Medical Doctor (MD) or a Doctor of Osteopathic medicine (DO) prior to resuming practice or competition.
  - Athlete's return to play should consist of a step-wise protocol as recommended by the LHSAA.
  - LHSAA "Return to Competition" form must be completed and signed by an MD or DO and kept on file by the Head Coach before athlete returns to practice/play.
- **Go to the Emergency Room or Call 911 if Athlete:**
  - is having trouble staying conscious
  - has severe confusion
  - keeps vomiting
  - has a severe headache
  - has numbness or tingling in arms or legs
  - has vision changes that do not get better.

## Head Injury Information

Any athlete suspected of having a concussion should be removed from play, and then seeks medical evaluation.

### Signs to watch for:

Problems could arise over the first 24-48 hours. The athlete should not be left alone and must go to the hospital immediately if the following occurs:

- Headache that gets worse
- Very drowsy or can't be awakened
- Can't recognize people or places
- Repeated vomiting
- Behaves unusually or seems confused or very irritable
- Seizures (arms and legs jerk uncontrollably)
- Weak or numb arms or legs
- Unsteady on their feet; slurred speech

**Remember, it is better to be safe.**

Consult your doctor after a suspected concussion before allowing athlete to return to play. Medical clearance should be given before return to play.

## NOSM Concussion Protocol

1. Post-Concussion: The parent in conjunction with the Athletic Trainer will decide whether to take athlete to ER, Family Physician or North Oaks Orthopaedic Specialty Center.
2. Physician will decide whether to send to Neurologist for further evaluation or to allow athlete to start the LHSAA step-wise approach to return to play.
3. Once physician gives the okay to start the LHSAA step-wise approach to return to play, our Athletic Trainers will perform tests.
4. After successfully completing the LHSAA step-wise approach to return to play, a LHSAA "Return to Competition" form must be signed by that Physician prior to athlete returning to competition. This form must be given to head coach to be put in the athletes' file.
5. Athletic Trainer reserves the right to progress athlete back to full participation in a safe and responsible manner once cleared by Physician.

## LHSAA Step-Wise Approach to Return to Play Progression

### Rules:

1. Monitor symptoms closely.
2. Do not progress to the next step until symptom free for about 24 hours.
3. If symptoms occur the athlete should return to Step 1.
  - Complete mental rest. No school work, text messages, video games.  
**Objective:** Recovery
  - Consisting of a step-wise return to classroom activities.  
**Objective:** Recovery of cognitive skills
  - Consisting of walking, stationary bike, swimming, intensity less than 70% max heart rate.  
**Objective:** Increase heart rate
  - Consisting of non-contact running drills, running, cutting, jumping.  
**Objective:** Addition of movement drills
  - Consisting of complex training drills, passing drills.  
**Objective:** Exercise, coordination, use of cognitive skills
  - Return to normal practice activity when cleared to do so.  
**Objective:** Restored confidence and skill
  - Normal Game Play.
  - Monitor for any return of symptoms.

General Info on Concussions: [www.stopsportsinjuries.org](http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org)