

Consensus Statement on Concussion

1.0 Policy

All participants, parents and coaches shall receive fact sheets on concussions from us. A written acknowledgement should be signed by the parent of a minor or by an adult athlete and returned to us prior to participation in any practice, meet or event. Any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion should be removed immediately and should not return until evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating concussions. This policy and supporting paperwork are our responsibility as is compliance with all state and local laws dealing with concussion. A sample fact sheet is attached to this statement.

2.0 Application of the Policy

Between 2009 and 2012 at least 41 states passed legislation targeting youth sports related concussions. Each state has specific regulations that may impact our operations. Some examples: Many states require coaches and officials to take courses on recognizing the symptoms of concussions and head injuries. Other states require sharing of fact sheets on concussions with coaching staff, athletes and parents. A few states, such as California, require organizations using school district facilities provide a statement of compliance with the policies for the management of concussion and head injuries required of the school districts by state laws. All of these policies are designed to protect an athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury during an event. Commonly, the return of that athlete to an event is prohibited until they are evaluated by a licensed health care professional, trained in the management of concussions, acting within the scope of his or her practice. Each state and/or the CDC have educational resources that should be utilized. Concussion fact sheets should be shared with coaches, athletes, and parents.

3.0 Policy Objectives

The primary goal of this Policy is to reduce the risk of harm to athletes and to educate coaches and parents on the importance of concussion management. All employees should review the Consensus statement on concussion in sport developed at the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Zurich, November 2012, or similar educational material.

4.0 What is a Concussion?

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) define concussion as “a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works.” Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. The Zurich Conference on Concussion in Sport also states that concussion typically results in the rapid onset of

short-lived impairment of neurological function that resolves spontaneously. However, symptoms and signs may evolve over a number of minutes to hours or in some cases may be even more prolonged.

5.0 Signs and Symptoms of Concussions:

Athletes do not have to be “knocked out” to have a concussion. In fact, less than 1 out of 10 concussions result in loss of consciousness. Concussion symptoms can develop right away or up to 48 hours after the injury. Ignoring any signs or symptoms of a concussion can put an athlete’s health at risk!

Signs Observed by Coaches, Parents or Guardians

- Appears dazed, stunned or confused
- Unsure about event, location, or name of meet
- Forgets an instruction or assignment
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes – irritability, sadness, nervousness, emotional
- Can’t recall events before or after incident

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Any headache or “pressure” in head - how badly it hurts does not matter
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”
- Trouble falling asleep
- Sleeping more or less than usual

6.0 Administration

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- We are responsible to identify and be in compliance with the state and local laws and requirements regarding educational, management, and insurance requirements for management and treatment of concussions.
- All coaches, officials, athletes, and parents should be familiar with the concussion information sheet for swimmers.