

# SO, YOUR CHILD HAS A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION WHAT DO YOU DO?



If your child has had a knock to the head, you may be feeling anxious and unsure about what to do next. The following information will help you understand concussion, recognise the signs and assist you in making decisions regarding the well-being of your child.

## WHAT IS CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. You can't see a concussion, and signs and symptoms can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. What seems to be a mild bump or knock to the head can be serious.

## COMMON CAUSES OF SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION

- > Head clash
- > Hard fall onto the ground or an opponent's body
- > A hit to the head from an opponent
- > A hit to the head from ball or piece of sporting equipment

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR IMMEDIATELY

These are the common signs and symptoms of a probable concussion:

### SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS/GUARDIANS:

- > Appears dazed or stunned
- > Confusion
- > Dizziness/balance problems
- > Forgets an instruction
- > Answers questions slowly
- > Shows moderate behaviour or personality changes
- > Physically unwell
- > Anxiety
- > Emotional

### SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE:

- > Headache or 'pressure' in the head
- > Nausea or vomiting
- > Balance problems or dizziness
- > Double or blurry vision
- > Sensitivity to light
- > Sensitivity to noise
- > Feeling sluggish or foggy
- > Concentration or memory problems
- > Confusion
- > Just 'not feeling right'

If your child experiences any of these symptoms, or if you observe these symptoms in your child, please seek medical attention.

## WHAT TO LOOK FOR OVER THE NEXT SIX HOURS?

Concussion is a serious condition. If your child has a probable concussion, or been diagnosed with concussion you will need to continue to monitor your child for these signs of deterioration:

- > Increased confusion or irritability
- > Repeated vomiting
- > Deteriorated conscious state
- > Worsening or severe headache
- > Unusual behavioural change
- > Seizures or convulsions
- > Progressive visual changes

If your child's health has worsened during this time, please seek urgent medical attention.

## RETURN TO SPORT

Children will be eager to return to physical activity but a practical recuperation period is necessary.

First 7-10 days:

- > Most concussion symptoms settle 7-10 days post injury.
- > During this time, a period of cognitive and physical rest is necessary for recovery.
- > Prepare your child (and where necessary your child's team) for the fact that they will miss at least one week to two weeks of sport.

Post the 7-10 day recovery period:

- > It is important to have a graded return to sport. Increase physical activity slowly over the 4-5 days.
- > After a head injury the best advice is: 'if in doubt, sit it out'.
- > Children should not return to contact/collision activities before 14 days from complete recovery from symptoms.

**Your child SHOULD ONLY return to sport or school PE AFTER assessment and clearance from a suitably qualified doctor.**

**W** WEEKEND  
SPORTS INJURY CLINIC

### NEW LOCATION

Calvary Adelaide Hospital Tenancy Building  
Ground Floor 120 Angas Street, Adelaide  
(cnr Angas & Pulteney Streets) T: 8232 5833  
**Toll free injury line: 1800 888 925**



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