



# **NMAA** New Mexico Activities Association **CONCUSSION IN SPORTS**

## **A Fact Sheet for Athletes and Parents**

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### **WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?**

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, such as a goalpost.

### **WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?**

#### *Observed by the Athlete*

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light
- Bothered by noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”

#### *Observed by the Parent / Guardian*

- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events after hit or fall
- Appears dazed or stunned

### **WHAT TO DO IF SIGNS/SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION ARE PRESENT**

#### *Athlete*

- **TELL YOUR COACH IMMEDIATELY!**
- Inform Parents
- Seek Medical Attention
- Give Yourself Time to Recover

#### *Parent / Guardian*

- Seek Medical Attention
- Keep Your Child Out of Play
- Discuss Plan to Return with the Coach

***It's better to miss one game than the whole season.***

***Give yourself time to get better. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.***

## **RETURN TO PLAY GUIDELINES UNDER THE SB1**

1. Remove immediately from activity when signs/symptoms are present.
2. Must not return to full activity prior to a minimum of one week..
3. Release from medical professional required for return.
4. Follow school district's return to play guidelines.
5. Coaches continue to monitor for signs/symptoms once athletes return to activity.

Students need cognitive rest from the classroom, texting, cell phones, etc.

## **REFERENCES ON SENATE BILL 1 AND BRAIN INJURIES**

### **Senate Bill 1:**

<http://www.nmlegis.gov/Sessions/10%20Regular/final/SB0001.pdf>

**For more information on brain injuries check the following websites:**

<http://www.nfhs.org/sportsmed.aspx>

<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

<http://www.stopsportsinjuries.org/concussion.aspx>

<http://www.ncaa.org/wps/wcm/connect/public/ncaa/Health+and+Safety/index.html>



## **SIGNATURES**

By signing below, I acknowledge that I have received and reviewed the attached NMAA's *Concussion in Sports Fact Sheet for Athletes and Parents*. I also acknowledge and I understand the risks of brain injuries associated with participation in school athletic activity, and I am aware of the State of the New Mexico's Senate Bill 1; Concussion Law.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent/Guardian's Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date