

## **Township of Manalapan Sports-Related Concussion and Head Injury Fact Sheet and Parent/Guardian Acknowledgement Form**

A concussion is a brain injury that can be caused by a blow to the head or body that disrupts normal functioning of the brain. Concussions are a type of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI), which can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally functions. Concussions can cause significant and sustained neuropsychological impairment affecting problem solving, planning, memory, attention, concentration, and behavior.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that 300,000 concussions are sustained during sports related activities nationwide, and more than 62,000 concussions are sustained each year in high school contact sports. Second-impact syndrome occurs when a person sustains a second concussion while still experiencing symptoms of a previous concussion. It can lead to severe impairment and even death of the victim.

Legislation (P.L. 2010, Chapter 94) signed on December 7, 2010, mandated measures to be taken in order to ensure the safety of K-12 student-athletes involved in interscholastic sports in New Jersey. It is imperative that athletes, coaches, and parent/guardians are educated about the nature and treatment of sports related concussions and other head injuries. The legislation states that:

Any athlete who participates in a sports program and is suspected of sustaining a concussion will be immediately removed from competition or practice. The athlete will not be allowed to return to competition or practice until he/she has written clearance from a physician trained in concussion treatment.

### **Quick Facts**

- Most concussions do not involve loss of consciousness
- You can sustain a concussion even if you do not hit your head
- A blow elsewhere on the body can transmit an "impulsive" force to the brain and cause a concussion

### **Signs of Concussions (Observed by Coach or Parent/Guardian)**

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets plays or demonstrates short term memory difficulties (e.g. unsure of game, opponent)
- Exhibits difficulties with balance, coordination, concentration, and attention
- Answers questions slowly or inaccurately
- Demonstrates behavior or personality changes
- Is unable to recall events prior to or after the hit or fall

### **Symptoms of Concussion (Reported by Athlete)**

- Headache
- Nausea/vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double vision or changes in vision
- Sensitivity to light/sound
- Feeling of sluggishness or foginess
- Difficulty with concentration, short term memory, and/or confusion

### **What Should an Athlete do if they think they have a concussion?**

- **Don't hide it.** Tell your Coach and Parent/Guardian.
- **Report it.** Don't return to competition or practice with symptoms of a concussion or head injury. The sooner you report it, the sooner you may return-to-play.
- **Take time to recover.** If you have a concussion your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is healing you are much more likely to sustain a second concussion. Repeat concussions can cause permanent brain injury.

**What can happen if an athlete continues to play with a concussion or returns to play too soon?**

- Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the athlete vulnerable to second impact syndrome.
- Second impact syndrome is when an athlete sustains a second concussion while still having symptoms from a previous concussion or head injury.
- Second impact syndrome can lead to severe impairment and even death in extreme cases.

**Should there be any temporary academic accommodations made for Student-Athletes who have suffered a concussion?**

- To recover cognitive rest is just as important as physical rest. Reading, texting, testing-even watching movies can slow down an athletes recovery.
- Stay home from school with minimal mental and social stimulation until all symptoms have resolved.
- Students may need to take rest breaks, spend fewer hours at school, be given extra time to complete assignments, as well as being offered other instructional strategies and classroom accommodations.

**Athletes who have sustained a concussion should complete a graduated return-to-play system before they may resume competition or practice, according to the following protocol:**

- **Step 1:** Completion of a full day of normal cognitive activities (school day, studying for tests, watching practice, interacting with peers) without reemergence of any signs or symptoms. If no return of symptoms, next day advance.
- **Step 2:** Light Aerobic exercise, which includes walking, swimming, and stationary cycling, keeping the intensity below 70% maximum heart rate. No resistance training. The objective of this step is increased heart rate.
- **Step 3:** Sport-specific exercise including skating, and/or running: no head impact activities. The objective of this step is to add movement.
- **Step 4:** Non contact training drills (e.g. passing drills). Athlete may initiate resistance training.
- **Step 5:** Following medical clearance (from physician trained in concussion treatment), participation in normal training activities. The objective of this step is to restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching and medical staff.
- **Step 6:** Return to play involving normal exertion or game activity.

For further information on Sports-Related Concussions and other Head Injuries, please visit:

[www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/sports/index.html);

[www.nfhs.com](http://www.nfhs.com);

[www.ncaa.org/health-safety](http://www.ncaa.org/health-safety)

[www.bianj.org](http://www.bianj.org);

[www.atsnj.org](http://www.atsnj.org)

I affirm that I have read and understand the facts regarding sports-related concussions and will adhere to the graduated return-to-play protocol when necessary:

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Student-Athlete

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Print Student-Athlete's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of Parent/Guardian

\_\_\_\_\_  
Print Parent/Guardian's Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date