

York Preparatory Academy Concussion Protocol

York Preparatory Academy (YPA) is devoted to the prevention, identification, evaluation, and management of concussions in athletics. Following current national, state, and SCHSL medical and legislative guidelines and recommendations, YPA has created a comprehensive protocol to ensure that any athlete who displays signs and symptoms of a concussion will be removed from athletic participation and evaluated for a concussion by an athletics healthcare professional who has education and experience in the diagnosis, management, treatment, and the return to play of concussions. Any athlete who sustains a concussion will not be able to return to play until medical clearance is obtained and a return to play protocol is completed without symptoms.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a mild-traumatic brain injury that results from any trauma to the head, face, neck, or elsewhere on the body that results in the brain rebounding off the inside of the skull. The trauma can be caused by being hit by something or someone (i.e. baseball, bat, tackle from or colliding with another player), or from strong contact with an immovable, unyielding, or hard object (i.e. the floor, ground, fence, etc.).

Signs and Symptoms

Observed by Coaching Staff

Appears dazed or stunned
Confused about assignment or position
Forgets Plays
Unsure of game, score, or opponent
Moves Clumsily
Answers questions slowly
May lose consciousness (even briefly)
Show behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events before a hit or fall
Can't recall events after a hit or fall

Reported by the Student Athlete

Headache or "pressure" in the head
Nausea and/or vomiting
Balance Problems or Dizziness
Double or Blurry Vision
Sensitivity to Light
Sensitivity to Noise
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Concentration or memory problems
Confusion
Does not "feel right"

Education and Acknowledgement

- There is an NCAA Concussion Fact Sheet that has been included at the end of this protocol.
- Before being allowed to participate in any sport, all YPA athletes must read the Athletic Handbook where this protocol lies and sign a waiver stating they have read and understand the contents of the handbook.

- Before being allowed to participate in any sport, all YPA athletes and parents must sign a concussion awareness statement agreeing that they have read the concussion protocol and understand the information provided and are aware of their responsibility to factually report their injury to the staff athletic trainer, including the signs and symptoms of a concussion.
- Students participating in all sports will be required to complete baseline ImPACT testing with the staff certified athletic trainer at the beginning of the sport season.
- All coaches will be required to comply with the concussion policy that is in place and complete the CDC Concussion Course in compliance with SCHSL mandates.

Evaluation

- All athletes that have made it onto any team will be required to complete baseline ImPACT testing prior to the start of the season.
- Any athlete experiencing concussion symptoms should report to the staff certified athletic trainer as soon as possible.
- All athletes that show signs, symptoms, and behaviors of concussion will be immediately removed from athletic participation by the staff athletic trainer (or coach in the absence of the athletic trainer) and evaluated by the staff athletic trainer as soon as possible.
- A SCAT5 assessment will be performed by the staff athletic trainer as soon as possible following the injury for all students showing signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion.
- All athletes who exhibit signs, symptoms, and behaviors of a concussion should be assessed by a physician of the parent's choice that is trained in concussion management.
- A concussed athlete should regularly report to the staff athletic trainer (preferably every school day or every other school day) to perform a "Symptom Evaluation" by filling out the symptom portion of the SCAT5. This will help judge the amount and severity of symptoms.
- ImPACT post-injury testing will be conducted.

Return to Play Criteria

- No concussed athlete will return to play on the same day the injury occurred.
- No athlete will participate while symptomatic.
- Once the concussed athlete is asymptomatic for 48 hours, they will perform ImPACT post-injury testing. They will perform this daily until post-injury scores return to match those of baseline testing.
- Once ImPACT post-injury testing matches the baseline results and cleared by a physician, the athlete will undergo a stepwise exertional testing over several days as described in the

Zurich Consensus Statement. Once the stepwise exertional program is successfully completed, the athlete will be able to return to play.

Academic Considerations

- Teachers of a concussed athlete (as well as administrators, athletic director, school nurse, and guidance) will be informed of the athlete's injury and will be provided with the CDC Concussion Fact Sheet for Teachers. Classroom modifications will be made as appropriate.
- Recommendations by the treating physician for academic modifications will be followed by the classroom teachers of the concussed student.

Management of Athletes Suspected of Having Concussion

All students who are experiencing symptoms should report to the staff certified athletic trainer (or coach in the absence of the athletic trainer) as soon as possible. Any athlete showing signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion should be removed by the athletic trainer (or coach in the absence of the athletic trainer) and evaluated by a medical staff member as soon as possible.

Pursuant to SC state law as follows, a student athlete who has been removed from play may return to play if, as a result of evaluating the student athlete on site, the athletic trainer, physician, physician assistant pursuant to scope of practice guidelines or nurse practitioner pursuant to a written protocol determines in his/her best professional judgment that the student athlete does not have any signs or symptoms of a concussion or brain injury

- Doctor of Medicine (MD)
- Doctor of Osteopathic Medicine (DO)
- Nurse Practitioner (FNP-C)
- Physician's Assistant (PA)
- Certified Athletic Trainer (ATC and/or SCAT)

Anyone not fitting one of the above descriptions is not qualified to determine the status of the concussed student/athlete.

No student-athlete will return to play the same day they sustain a concussion or present with ANY concussion symptoms, until cleared by the appropriate medical professionals.

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, the following people will be notified and will receive instructions on how to take care of that student-athlete:

- Parents
- Head Coach
- Student-Athlete's teachers (may have trouble in class)

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, their parents will be contacted as soon as possible and both parents and student will be further educated on concussion management. The "Athlete Information" portion of the SCAT5 will be provided to the parent/student-athlete.

When a student-athlete sustains a concussion, they will be required to complete a SCAT5 with the certified athletic trainer as soon as possible. Each athlete with a possible concussion will be required to see a doctor to rule out any underlying problems.

After the first evaluation and SCAT5 by the certified athletic trainer, and being seen by a physician, the student-athlete will be required to report to the certified athletic trainer daily to do a symptom check (First Portion of the SCAT). The SCAT5 (assessments other than symptoms check) will be performed at the following intervals until they are completely asymptomatic and score at least 90%:

- Within 24 hours of injury
- 72 hours post-injury and every other day after until asymptomatic and a 90% or higher on the SCAT5
- ImPACT post-injury testing will be conducted once asymptomatic.

Graduated Return to Play Protocol for the Concussed Athlete

The student-athlete will begin the graduated return to play protocol once they are cleared by a physician, are symptom free for at least 48 hours, pass the SCAT5 with a 90% or higher, and ImPACT post-injury test scores have returned to that of their baseline test.

- **Day 1:** Low levels of physical activity. This may include light walking or jogging for 15+ minutes.
- **Day 2:** Moderate levels of physical activity with some head motion. This may include a light warm up and sprinting in a straight line.
- **Day 3:** Heavy non-contact physical activity with major head motion. This may include sprinting with turning (i.e. shuttle runs), up and down activities (i.e. burpees, medicine ball slams, jumping jacks, plyometrics, etc.), agility/coordination drills (i.e. speed ladder, fast feet, mountain climbers, side shuffling, etc.), sport specific movements (i.e. dribbling, passing, etc.).
- **Day 4:** Non-contact, sport-specific practice with the team. The athlete cannot participate in any activity that involves contact with other players or potentially being hit by a moving object (i.e. batting with a pitcher throwing the ball.)

- **Day 5:** Full-contact practice with the team.
- **Day 6:** Return to competition.

If the student athlete becomes symptomatic during any stage of the return to play protocol, they will return to day one once they are symptom free again for at least 24 hours.

NOTE: It is common for an athlete to develop symptoms during any day of a return to play protocol if their concussion is not completely healed. The development of symptoms is what tells that the athlete is not ready to return to play. Hence, the purpose of the protocol.

Additional Information

www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html

www.biausa.org/SC/index.htm

www.nfhs.org/

www.NCAA.org/health-safety

Please contact the YPA staff Certified Athletic Trainer for further information:

Alina McDonald, MS, SCAT, ATC
Certified Athletic Trainer
alina.mcdonald@yorkprepsc.org

Sample Concussion Timeline

- Athlete Completes Tryouts and Makes the Team
- Athlete Completes Baseline ImPact Testing
- Athlete Sustains Concussive Injury Mechanism
 - Athlete is removed from play if it occurs during practice or game.
 - Athlete reports it to the Staff Athletic Trainer if the athletic trainer is not present.
 - I.e. athletic trainer is at another field or if sustained at away game
 - Even if the injury is sustained outside of school activities (i.e. car accident)
- Athlete is evaluated by the staff athletic trainer ASAP.
 - SCAT5 performed
 - ImPACT Post-Injury Test Performed
 - Parents are contacted (if they do not already know, they will be informed of the injury) and informed on concussion management/next steps.
- Athlete is referred to physician with SCAT5 and ImPACT test results.
 - Athlete will be sent with a form for the physician to fill out to determine if a follow up visit before return to play protocol begins is necessary.
- Athlete is out of activity until symptom free for at least 48 hours.
 - Classroom accommodations will be made if necessary
 - Athlete will report to the athletic trainer every school day to perform a symptom checklist.
 - SCAT5 will be re-performed every other school day until an overall score of 90% or higher is achieved.
- Once symptom free for 48 hours, Post-Injury ImPACT testing will be performed daily until results return to baseline levels.
- Athlete will return to physician to be cleared to begin Return-To-Play protocol if the physician warrants a second visit after the first visit where the athlete was diagnosed.
 - The physician can choose to release the athlete after the initial visit to begin RTP with the athletic trainer once symptom free for 48 hours and ImPACT and SCAT5 testing has returned to normal levels.
- Return to Play protocol will be performed.
 - Day 1 - light aerobic activity
 - Day 2 - light warm up plus sprints
 - Day 3 - light warm up, shuttle sprints, burpees, plyometrics, medicine ball slams, agility drills, etc.
 - Day 4 - Non-contact practice
 - Day 5 - Full-contact practice
 - Day 6 - Full Return To Play
- Assuming everything goes symptom free, the athlete will be cleared to Return-To-Play.



CONCUSSION SAFETY

WHAT STUDENT-ATHLETES
NEED TO KNOW

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury. It follows a force to the head or body and leads to a change in brain function. It is not typically accompanied by loss of consciousness.

How can I keep myself safe?

1. Know the symptoms.

You may experience ...

- Headache or head pressure
- Nausea
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy or foggy
- Confusion, concentration or memory problems

2. Speak up.

- If you think you have a concussion, stop playing and talk to your coach, athletic trainer or team physician immediately.

3. Take time to recover.

- Follow your team physician and athletic trainer's directions during concussion recovery. If left unmanaged, there may be serious consequences.
- Once you've recovered from a concussion, talk with your physician about the risks and benefits of continuing to participate in your sport.

How can I be a good teammate?

1. Know the symptoms.

You may notice that a teammate ...

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Forgets an instruction
- Is confused about an assignment or position
- Is unsure of the game, score or opponent
- Appears less coordinated
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness

2. Encourage teammates to be safe.

- If you think one of your teammates has a concussion, tell your coach, athletic trainer or team physician immediately.
- Help create a culture of safety by encouraging your teammates to report any concussion symptoms.

3. Support your injured teammates.

- If one of your teammates has a concussion, let him or her know you and the team support playing it safe and following medical advice during recovery.
- Being unable to practice or join team activities can be isolating. Make sure your teammates know they're not alone.

No two concussions are the same. New symptoms can appear hours or days after the initial impact. If you are unsure if you have a concussion, talk to your athletic trainer or team physician immediately.

What happens if I get a concussion and keep practicing or competing?

- Due to brain vulnerability after a concussion, an athlete may be more likely to suffer another concussion while symptomatic from the first one.
- In rare cases, repeat head trauma can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage or even death.
- Continuing to play after a concussion increases the chance of sustaining other injuries too, not just concussion.
- Athletes with concussion have reduced concentration and slowed reaction time. This means that you won't be performing at your best.
- Athletes who delay reporting concussion take longer to recover fully.

What are the long-term effects of a concussion?

- We don't fully understand the long-term effects of a concussion, but ongoing studies raise concerns.
- Athletes who have had multiple concussions *may* have an increased risk of degenerative brain disease and cognitive and emotional difficulties later in life.

What do I need to know about repetitive head impacts?

- Repetitive head impacts mean that an individual has been exposed to repeated impact forces to the head. These forces may or may not meet the threshold of a concussion.
- Research is ongoing but emerging data suggest that repetitive head impact also may be harmful and place a student-athlete at an increased risk of neurological complications later in life.

Did you know?

- NCAA rules require that team physicians and athletic trainers manage your concussion and injury recovery independent of coaching staff, or other non-medical, influence.
- We're learning more about concussion every day. To find out more about the largest concussion study ever conducted, which is being led by the NCAA and U.S. Department of Defense, visit ncaa.org/concussion.

CONCUSSION TIMELINE



For more information, visit ncaa.org/concussion.
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