

Your athlete has a concussion; now what?

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. A concussion should not be downplayed as a “ding” or a “bell ringer.” It is an injury that hurts the brain’s tissues and function (2013 Zurich Consensus Statement). Not only will nerve signals be affected, but thinking may be interrupted as well. There are many signs that may be shown in very different intensities. Full recovery may last from a few days to several months. Recovery is typically progressive from stage to stage and is not the same for any two athletes.

What signs may be shown?

Dizziness	Difficulty concentrating	Nausea	Headache	Vision problems
Feeling mentally “foggy”	Memory problems	Vomiting	Sound sensitivity	Nervousness
Balance problems	Attention/focus trouble	Sadness	Light sensitivity	Abnormal fatigue
If you have any questions or concerns about any of these signs or the signs become worse, seek medical attention immediately.				

How long will full recovery take?

Personal recovery is not very often the same across athletes. Often, the younger the athlete, the longer the recovery will take. The longer there is memory trouble, dizziness or feeling mentally “foggy,” the longer recovery will take. The total number of concussions will increase the length of the recovery from the current concussion.

How can healing be encouraged?

The athlete requires rest from activity and thinking	Rest is a key piece	Sleep is essential
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The athlete **SHOULD** do the following in a quiet, dark room:

Sit	Sleep	Relax	Quiet music, television or light reading may be included if there is NO INCREASE in symptoms.
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The athlete should **AVOID** these activities as long as he or she is having symptoms. Rest is very important for recovery.

<p>Physical activities to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activity that raises heart rate and/or blood pressure • Physical education class • Cardio or weight training • Sports practices • Housework or chores 	<p>Mental (cognitive) activities to avoid:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schoolwork: delay tests, papers, assignments, reading, homework (All assignments must be made up when signs are resolved.) • Texting or instant messaging • Bright/flashing lights • Video games of any sort • Action/adventure movies • Computer work or games • Loud music of any kind
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