

### **Concussion Protocol:**

1. If an Athlete sustains a head injury and is pulled from a game they will receive a sideline assessment.
  - a. If the athlete does not show signs of a concussion and the athletic trainer makes the decision to allow the athlete to return to the game, the athlete will not need to see a health physician (unless the athlete starts developing concussion like symptoms).
  - b. If the athlete does show signs of a concussion the athletic trainer will keep the player out for the remainder of the game.
2. If an athlete does not return to the game, the athletic director, school nurse, and parent will receive a verbal and hard copy report of the athlete's head injury. A health physician must evaluate the athlete in order to diagnose the head injury as a concussion or not. The athletic trainer, athletic director, and school nurse cannot diagnose anyone with a concussion. A healthcare professional must complete diagnosis.
  - a. If the athlete does not have a concussion, the health physician must clear the athlete to return to play. The athletic director, school nurse, and parents will give final approval after receiving clearance from the physician.
  - b. If the athlete does sustain a concussion, the athlete will not participate in sports until:
    - i. The athlete is concussion free
    - ii. The physician clears the athlete to play (The clearance must specify that the athlete can return to full participation in SPORTS on the clearance form).
    - iii. The athlete must perform the 5 step concussion return to play program.

### **5 Step Concussion Procedure:**

It is important for an athlete's parent(s) and coach(es) to watch for concussion symptoms after each day's return to play progression activity. An athlete should only move to the next step if they do not have any new symptoms at the current step. If an athlete's symptoms come back or if he or she gets new symptoms, this is a sign that the athlete is pushing too hard. The athlete should stop these activities and the athlete's medical provider should be contacted. After more rest and no concussion symptoms, the athlete can start at the previous step.

#### **Baseline: Back to School First**

Athlete is back to their regular school activities, is no longer experiencing symptoms from the injury when doing normal activities, and has the green-light from their health care provider to begin the return to play process.

#### **Step 1: Light aerobic activity**

Begin with light aerobic exercise only to increase an athlete's heart rate. This means about 5 to 10 minutes on an exercise bike, walking, or light jogging. No weight lifting at this point.

**Step 2: Moderate activity**

Continue with activities to increase an athlete's heart rate with body or head movement. This includes moderate jogging, brief running, moderate-intensity stationary biking, moderate-intensity weightlifting (less time and/or less weight from their typical routine).

**Step 3: Heavy, non-contact activity**

Add heavy non-contact physical activity, such as sprinting/running, high-intensity stationary biking, regular weightlifting routine, non-contact sport-specific drills (in 3 planes of movement).

**Step 4: Practice & full contact**

Young athlete may return to practice and full contact (if appropriate for the sport) in controlled practice.

**Step 5: Competition**

Young athlete may return to competition.