

# CONCUSSION CARE

It's better to miss a game than a whole season. That's the key message of a campaign by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention aimed at under-rated health threat: sports-related concussions.

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury. All concussions are potentially serious injuries whose symptoms can persist for days to even months.

## WHY IS CONCUSSION DANGEROUS?

A concussion can cause significant impairment without the person losing consciousness. If a second concussion occurs before the first one has passed, serious or permanent cognitive, behavioral and physical changes can occur.

## WHAT CAUSES A CONCUSSION?

Concussions can be caused by a blow to the head or a sudden acceleration/deceleration event. Any athlete in any sport can be at risk of a concussion.

## HOW IS CONCUSSION DIAGNOSED?

Common symptoms can begin immediately or after a few days. A formal diagnosis requires a thorough evaluation by a qualified doctor and a complete physical exam.

## Signs and Symptoms of Possible Concussion

The athlete may report symptoms including:

Signs that may be apparent to others include:

Headache	Balance problems
Nausea	Loss of consciousness
Dizziness	Personality changes
Unusual sensitivity to light or noise	Sudden memory problems
Vision changes	Confusion
Difficulty concentrating	Disorientation
"Feeling in a fog"	Increased irritability or vomiting
Neck pain	Repeating the same words or phrases

## If a Concussion is Suspected During a Game:

- If a head injury has occurred, the athlete should be removed from the game immediately.
- A sideline assessment should be provided at once, either by a certified athletic or medical provider or the coaching staff, who should be trained to recognize a concussed athlete.
- The athlete should be taken to a hospital immediately for emergency evaluation...
  - IF** the athlete is unconscious or non-responsive for more than 30 seconds
  - IF** there is any concern that a more significant head injury has occurred
  - IF** any of the following symptoms appear:
    - Seizure activity
    - Slurred speech
    - Significant drowsiness
    - Progressively worsening headache
    - Weakness, numbness or tingling in arms or legs
    - Continuous vomiting

**Follow-up care with a medical professional should be arranged  
24 to 48 hours after the injury.**

## Rochester Regional Health

The fellowship-trained specialists of Rochester Regional Health Sports Medicine are on the field at many of the region's high school, collegiate and professional sporting events, ready to assist at a moment's notice. Working with the orthopaedic and neurologic teams of Rochester Regional Health, they provide a full continuum of services including:

- Follow-up evaluations at a state-of-the-art facility
- A complete array of diagnostic imaging scans and assessments
- Full collaboration with our complete regional care network, as needed

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