

Sports Injuries & Concussions

Concussions are the most common brain injuries sustained in sports. Concussions are a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a blow or jolt to the head. Concussions can be mild or severe and interfere with the way the brain normally works. Sometimes symptoms show up immediately, but they can also appear several days or weeks after the injury. Always see a health care professional if you think you might have a concussion.

Did you know...

- Most concussions do NOT involve loss of consciousness.
- You can get a concussion even if you do NOT hit your head. An indirect blow elsewhere on the body can transmit an “impulsive” force to the head and cause a concussion to the brain.
- Multiple concussions can have long-lasting impacts and affect your quality of life.

Signs and Symptoms of Concussions

- Nausea (feeling that you might vomit)
- Dizziness or balance problems
- Double or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Headache
- Feeling sluggish or tired
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Confusion
- Trouble concentrating
- Trouble remembering



What to look for...

Before the Games Begin

- Get your child a sports physical or general health exam.
- Know your coach. Is she/he a state approved coach for the sport? CPR trained? First aid trained?
- Make sure your child is physically and psychologically ready to play and knows the basic skills.
- Make sure your child is playing against kids of similar skill, weight, and maturity.
- Make sure your child wears the appropriate safety gear and equipment for the sport.
- Make sure your child warms up and stretches before playing.

During the Game

- Provide adult supervision at all times.
- Keep children hydrated prior to, during, and following athletic activities.
- Provide adequate rest breaks.
- Practice good sportsmanship and play by the rules.
- Provide emergency contact and health information with the coach.
- Pay attention to changing weather conditions and check the activity area for hazards.

- Over the last decade (2001-2009), 2.6 million children and youth <19 children were treated for sports-related emergency department (ED) visits annually; of which 6.5% (173,285) involved a traumatic brain injury or concussion.
- Of the 1.4 million traumatic brain injuries sustained by children and adults in the United States each year, 75% are mild and/or concussions.
- The activities associated with the greatest number of traumatic brain injuries are bicycling, football, playground activities, basketball, and soccer.

