

CONCUSSION INFORMATION *please read before registering*

CONCUSSION LAW

Due to the increase in concern for concussions in youth sports, there is now a Wisconsin Concussion Law. The Sun Prairie Parks, Recreation & Forestry Department requires all participants to review the Concussion Agreement and Information prior to registering for programs. Our participant safety is our number one concern!

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move rapidly back and forth. Even a 'ding,' 'getting your bell rung' or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What are the signs & symptoms of a concussion?

Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show up right after the injury or may appear days or weeks after the injury. If an athlete reports one or more symptoms of concussions listed below after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body, they should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating concussions, says they are symptom-free and they are OK to return to play.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about position or assignment
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game score or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes
- Cannot recall events prior to hit or fall
- Cannot recall events after hit or fall

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETES:

- Headaches or 'pressure' in the head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not 'feeling right' or 'feeling down'

Concussion Danger Signs

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. An athlete should receive immediate medical attention if after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body they exhibit any of the following danger signs:

- One pupil larger than the other
- Is drowsy or cannot be awakened
- A headache that gets worse or slurred speech
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting or nausea
- Convulsions, seizures or unusual behavior
- Cannot recognize people or places
- Becomes increasingly confused or agitated
- Loses consciousness for any amount of time

Why should an athlete report their symptoms?

If an athlete has a concussion, his/her brain needs time to heal. While an athlete's brain is healing, they are much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes to recover. In rare cases, repeat concussions in young athletes can result in brain swelling or permanent damage to their brain. It can even be fatal.

What should you do if you think your athlete has a concussion?

If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, remove them from play and seek medical attention. Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Keep the athlete out of play until a medical professional says they are symptom free and are OK to return to play. Rest is the key to help an athlete recover. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration (studying, computers, video games, etc.) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or worsen. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process that should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.

Why should parents & athletes be aware of this information?

On April 6, 2012, the State of Wisconsin joined 31 other states by enacting formal legislation dedicated to the safety of youth participating in sports. Wisconsin Act 172 relates to concussions and head injuries sustained in youth activities.

The law requires all youth athletic organizations to educate coaches, athletes and parents on the risks of concussions and head injuries and prohibits participation in a youth activity until the athlete and parent or guardian has returned a signed agreement sheet indicating they have reviewed the concussion and head injury informational materials. The law requires immediate removal of an individual from a youth athletic activity if symptoms indicate a possible concussion has been sustained. A person who has been removed from a youth activity because of a determined or suspected concussion or head injury, may not participate again until he or she is evaluated by a health care provider and receives written clearance from the health care provider to return to the activity.

Where can I find out more about concussions & head injuries?

This information has been reformatted from the Center of Disease Control's Heads Up: Concussion in Youth Sports Program.

More information can be found online at:
cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.htm

Wisconsin Concussion Law can be found online at:
docs.legis.wisconsin.gov/2011/related/acts/172.pdf.

Additional information for parents, athletes, coaches, and officials can be found online at the Wisconsin Interscholastic Athletic Association's website: wiaawi.org/Health/Concussions.aspx.