



STATE LAW REGARDING SPORTS-RELATED HEAD INJURY & CONCUSSIONS

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts Executive Office of Health and Human Services and the Department of Public Health (DPH) now require that all schools subject to the Massachusetts Interscholastic Athletic Association (MIAA) rule participate in a mandatory sports head injury and concussion awareness program. Massachusetts State Law and the DPH regulations now require the following of all students participating in a public middle or high school extracurricular athletic activity, including marching band:

1.) At the required pre-season meeting for every season, the student and parent/guardian will be provided with information including a summary of the DPH rules relative to safety (below), recognition of symptoms of head injury, the biology and short-term/long-term consequences of a concussion, second impact syndrome, and rules for return to play after a head injury or concussion.

2.) At or before the start of each sport or band season, all students who plan to participate must complete and submit to the Coach/Band Leader a written comprehensive history with up-to-date information relative to concussion history. This shall include any head, face, or cervical spine injury history and any history of co-existent concussive injuries.

3.) Any student who sustains a head injury/suspected concussion or exhibits signs and symptoms of a concussion during a practice or competition shall be removed from the practice or competition immediately. The student may not return to the practice or competition that day and shall not participate in the extracurricular athletic activity until medical clearance from a licensed medical professional as authorized by the Department of Public Health is provided to the Coach/Band Leader.

4.) As a pre-requisite to participation, all first-time students are required to complete the DPH approved on-line head injury and concussion training program. The student will not be allowed to participate in the activity until a completion certificate has been submitted to the Coach/Band Leader. This free course is available through the National Federation of State High School Associations at <http://www.nfhslearn.com/electiveDetail.aspx?courseID=15000> or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at www.cdc.gov/concussion.

5.) All parents/guardians and all returning students must complete a head injury and concussion training program annually. This requirement can be satisfied by reviewing the attached printed material. As a pre-requisite to participation in the activity, both the student and parent/guardian must sign below acknowledging receipt of these materials.

Please complete the area below pertinent to previous head injury(ies), sign to verify that you have read the above and received the aforementioned materials regarding concussion and head injury information, and return this form to the Coach/Band Leader. This is required in order to participate in any extracurricular athletic activity at Triton Regional High School. Thank you.

Previous Head Injury/Concussion: No Yes (Provide details and dates on the back of this form)

Parent/Guardian (print)

Signature

Date

Student (print)

Signature

Date



Return to Athletic Participation

Subsequent to any serious injury and prior to further participation in that sport, an athlete should receive a medical release from a physician. Schools should use the MIAA Return to Athletic Participation Form for this purpose.

Form available at: <http://www.miaa.net/WB22-ReturnPart.pdf>

Concussion Rule

Any athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion (such as loss of consciousness, headache, dizziness, confusion, or balance problems) shall be immediately removed from the contest and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health-care professional.

School and athletic leaders are reminded that football and ice hockey have rules regarding health care professionals.

Each school must define the health care professional(s) and/or procedure(s) that must be satisfied before an athlete is allowed to return to participation. The individual(s) and/or procedure(s) must be in place for all student athletes, sports and levels.



HEADS*UP CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR **PARENTS**

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. 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 and symptoms?

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If your teen reports **one or more** symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appears dazed or stunned • Is confused about assignment or position • Forgets an instruction • Is unsure of game, score, or opponent • Moves clumsily • Answers questions slowly • Loses consciousness (<i>even briefly</i>) • Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes • Can't recall events <i>prior</i> to hit or fall • Can't recall events <i>after</i> hit or fall 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache or “pressure” in head • Nausea or vomiting • Balance problems or dizziness • Double or blurry vision • Sensitivity to light or noise • Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy • Concentration or memory problems • Confusion • Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

How can you help your teen prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your teens can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.

- Ensure that they follow their coaches' rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

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

- 1. Keep your teen out of play.** If your teen has a concussion, her/his brain needs time to heal. Don't let your teen return to play the day of the injury and until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating for concussion, says your teen is symptom-free and it's OK to return to play. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first—usually within a short period of time (hours, days, or weeks)—can slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. In rare cases, repeat concussions can result in edema (brain swelling), permanent brain damage, and even death.
- 2. Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your teen to return to sports.
- 3. Teach your teen that it's not smart to play with a concussion.** Rest is key after a concussion. Sometimes athletes wrongly believe that it shows strength and courage to play injured. Discourage others from pressuring injured athletes to play. Don't let your teen convince you that s/he's “just fine.”
- 4. Tell all of your teen's coaches and the student's school nurse about ANY concussion.** Coaches, school nurses, and other school staff should know if your teen has ever had a concussion. Your teen may need to limit activities while s/he is recovering from a concussion. Things such as studying, driving, working on a computer, playing video games, or exercising may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Talk to your health care professional, as well as your teen's coaches, school nurse, and teachers. If needed, they can help adjust your teen's school activities during her/his recovery.

If you think your teen has a concussion:

Don't assess it yourself. Take him/her out of play. Seek the advice of a health care professional.

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials *free-of-charge*, visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION



HEADS+UP

CONCUSSION IN HIGH SCHOOL SPORTS

A FACT SHEET FOR **ATHLETES**

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury that:

- Is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport or recreational activity.
- Can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.
- Can be serious even if you've just been "dinged" or "had your bell rung."

All concussions are serious. A concussion can affect your ability to do schoolwork and other activities (such as playing video games, working on a computer, studying, driving, or exercising). Most people with a concussion get better, but it is important to give your brain time to heal.

What are the symptoms of a concussion?

You can't see a concussion, but you might notice **one or more** of the symptoms listed below or that you "don't feel right" soon after, a few days after, or even weeks after the injury.

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Bothered by light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Difficulty paying attention
- Memory problems
- Confusion

What should I do if I think I have a concussion?

- **Tell your coaches and your parents.** Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach right away if you think you have a concussion or if one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- **Get a medical check-up.** A doctor or other health care professional can tell if you have a concussion and when it is OK to return to play.
- **Give yourself time to get better.** If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. Repeat concussions can increase the time it takes for you to recover and may cause more damage to your brain. It is important to rest and not return to play until you get the OK from your health care professional that you are symptom-free.

How can I prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.

- Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment. In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
 - The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
 - Worn correctly and the correct size and fit
 - Used every time you play or practice
- Follow your coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.

If you think you have a concussion:

Don't hide it. Report it. Take time to recover.

It's better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials *free-of-charge*, visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion.

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