



Flathead Soccer Club Concussion/Injury Policy and Procedure

On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the youth athlete and the athlete's parent and/or guardian prior to the youth athlete's initiating practice or competition.

Please read the information below and affix your signature to indicate that you have read this document. This form must be returned to your team or club and is good only for the 2011-12 sports year.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump or blow to the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. 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 or weeks after the injury. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

WHAT ARE THE SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

If your child has experienced a bump or blow to the head during a game or practice, look for any of the following signs and symptoms of a concussion:

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians

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 (even briefly)
Shows behavior or personality changes
Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
Can't recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

Headache or "pressure" in head
Nausea or vomiting
Balance problems or dizziness
Double or blurry vision
Sensitivity to light
Sensitivity to noise
Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
Concentration or memory problems
Confusion
Does not "feel right"

HOW CAN YOU HELP YOUR CHILD PREVENT A CONCUSSION?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion.

- Ensure that they follow their coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). Protective equipment should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Learn the signs and symptoms of a concussion.

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOUR CHILD HAS A CONCUSSION?

- 1. Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
- 2. Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon-while the brain is still healing-risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
- 3. Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in ANY sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

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

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often underreport symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents/guardians, and the athletes is the key for the athletes' safety.

No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance.

- A youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time.
- He or She may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed healthcare provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and has received written clearance to play from that healthcare provider.
- You should inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion, remember, it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season, and, when in doubt, the athlete sits it out.
- Additional current information regarding concussion management is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <http://www.cdc.gov/concussioninyouthsports/>

Injury Policy

It is the policy of FSC that all injuries, regardless of how minor they may seem, **MUST** be evaluated by the Licensed Athletic Trainer at the Sports Medicine tent that is located next to the concession stand at the KidSport soccer fields. If the Athletic Trainer deems a player unable to participate, the player may not return to play without written release from a Doctor of Medicine (MD).

By signing below, I indicate that I have reviewed the information regarding concussions and injuries outlined in this document:

Athlete Signature

Date

Athlete Name (Printed)

Parent/Guardian Signature

Date

Parent/Guardian Name (Printed)