

STUDENT/PARENT CONCUSSION AWARENESS FORM

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** Even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child/player reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

1. Headache that won’t go away.
2. Nausea/vomiting.
3. Balance problems, dizziness or light-headed.
4. Double/blurred vision or changes in vision.
5. Sensitivity to light or sound/noise.
6. Feeling of sluggishness, foggiess or lack of energy.
7. Difficulty with concentration, short-term memory, and/or confusion
8. Irritability or agitation.
9. Depression or anxiety.
10. Sleep disturbance.

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

1. Appears dazed, stunned, or disoriented.
2. Forgets plays or demonstrates short-term memory difficulties (e.g. is unsure of the game, score, or opponent)
3. Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination.
4. Answers questions slowly or inaccurately.
5. Loses consciousness.
6. Demonstrates behavior or personality changes.
7. Is unable to recall events prior to or after the hit.

What can happen if my child/player keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. No athlete should return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear.

Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury if they receive another concussion before they have completely recovered 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 under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different.

If you think your child/player has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete should return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear.

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time and may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a medical doctor or doctor of Osteopathy, trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance with return to play guidelines from that health care provider.

You should also inform your child’s Coach, Athletic Trainer (ATC), and/or Athletic Director, if you think that your child/player may have a concussion. And when it doubt, the athlete sits out.

RCPS Concussion Policy: Any student athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from the contest and shall not return to play until a medical release is issued by a “healthcare provider” including a licensed physician or another licensed individual under the supervision of a licensed physician, such as a nurse practitioner, physician assistant, or certified athletic trainer who has received training in concussion evaluation and management.

GHSA Concussion Policy By-Law 2.68 (c). It is mandatory that every coach in each GHSA sport participate in a free, online course on concussion management prepared by the NFHS and available at www.nfhslearn.com at least every two years- beginning the 2013-14 school year. Any coach in violation of the RCPS Concussion Protocol or GHSA Concussion Policy will be reported to the Athletic Coordinator and the Executive Director of Support Services.

This form is required by Georgia Law established in April 2013, coinciding with the “Return to Play Act of 2013.”

I have reviewed this information on concussion and am aware that a release by a ‘healthcare provider’ is required before a student may return to play under this policy.

Student Athlete Name Printed Date Parent/Guardian Signature Date

School Coach Signature Date