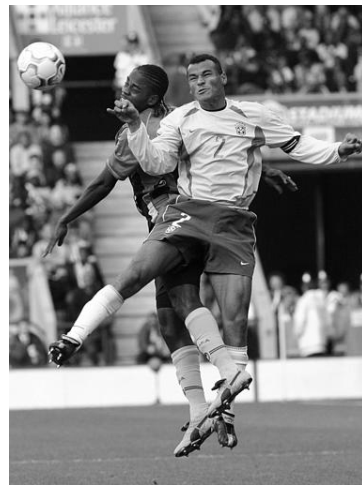


Understanding Sports-related Concussion:

Play safe

Play smart



What is a Concussion?

A concussion is an injury to the brain that:

- Is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head.
- Can change the way your brain normally works.
- Can range from mild to severe.
- Can occur during practices or games in any sport.
- 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."



How do I know if I've had a Concussion?

...something feels different...

- You might notice some symptoms right away (confusion, loss of balance, fogginess).
- You can't follow the game or the plays.
- Other symptoms may take hours, days, or weeks to appear (headache, irritability, poor concentration).
- You may have difficulty with your schoolwork or completing daily tasks.



What are the Symptoms of a Concussion?

3 symptom types

- Physical: Headache, nausea, balance problems or dizziness, double/fuzzy vision, sensitivity to light or noise, feeling sluggish or fatigued
- Thinking: Problems with concentration, memory (trouble following conversation or forgetting game plays), feeling foggy or groggy, confusion
- Emotions: irritable, more emotional, sadness

Signs that Parents/ Coaches/ Teammates See

- Appears dazed, stunned, glassy
- Is confused about game assignment and tasks
- Forgets plays, repeats same questions
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily/slowly
- Answers questions slowly
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events before hit or after hit
- Loses consciousness

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

- Do NOT ignore a blow or jolt to the head.
- Do NOT play with symptoms.
 - *Tell your coaches and your parents.*
 - *Get a medical checkup, especially if symptoms persist*

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

GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO RECOVER - REST!

- Your brain needs time to heal.**
- If not healed, your brain is more likely to be injured again - and it may be worse.**

What could happen if I do nothing?

- You are putting yourself in greater danger and are more likely to be re-injured.**
- Second and third injuries could cause permanent brain damage which are likely to be more severe and can take you longer to recover.**
- You are not helping your team if you continue playing with a concussion.**

After a Concussion, When Can I Return to Play?

After rest, increase your activity gradually until

- Symptoms no longer exist
- Cognitive/ thinking skills are back to “normal.”
- Cleared by medical professional
- **Recovery can take several days or weeks.**

How Can I Prevent a Concussion?

- Follow the safety rules for your sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship.
- Use proper equipment for the sport and position.
- Use well maintained equipment that is fitted properly and every time you play.

Key Points

- Know what a concussion is and its symptoms.
 - **3 types of symptoms.**
 - **Dings and bell-ringers count!**
- Don't ignore symptoms. Tell your coaches and parents.
 - **Teammates: Watch out for one another.**
- Give yourself time to recover. **REST!**
- Follow the rules of the sport.
- Use equipment properly.

Play Hard! Play Safe! Play Smart!

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

