

Sports Medicine for Adults and Children

Orthopaedics • Sports Medicine

Concussion

A concussion is a head injury that causes a temporary loss of normal brain function. It is sometimes called a “brain bruise.” Direct or indirect head trauma produces a concussion. It may or may not cause loss of consciousness. Therefore, if you are not knocked unconscious, you may have still suffered a concussion.

Common symptoms that occur include:

Headache
Nausea
Vomiting
Dizziness
Poor balance
Trouble with bright lights
Trouble with loud noises
Garbled or slurred speech
Repetitive speech
Inability to form new memories
Irritability
Feeling tired
Difficulty concentrating
Memory loss
Confusion

Any person suspected of suffering a concussion should be immediately removed from competition. They should NEVER be allowed to return to play the same day. Proper evaluation by a medical professional is required prior to an athlete's return. New research has revealed that adolescents may suffer significant problems with concentration and memory even if their concussion symptoms clear up within 15 minutes. If an athlete returns too soon, he or she is 10 times more likely to suffer another concussion. Coming back too early may result in

another concussion, placing the athlete at risk for irreversible brain damage, or even sudden death. This is called Second Impact Syndrome.

Indications for sending an athlete to the emergency room include:

Loss of consciousness
Vomiting more than once
Severe headaches
Significant worsening of other symptoms
If something just doesn't seem right to you
Neck pain

If an athlete seems to improve on the sidelines and does not develop any of the above problems, he or she can be sent home with a parent.

Parents should be instructed to do the following:

1. Watch for any of the above signs or symptoms. If they develop, go to ER.
2. Wake the athlete every 2-3 hours to check on them. Ask the athlete some basic questions about their symptoms, where they are, what happened, etc. Also assess the athlete's ability to move all four extremities. If abnormal, go to the ER.
3. See a qualified physician or Rainbow Sports Medicine specialist for assessment within 24-48 hours to determine his or her condition and receive guidance on appropriate return to sports. No athlete should return to sports until cleared by a qualified physician.

1-866-UH4-CARE
UHhospitals.org

About Us

University Hospitals Rainbow Babies & Children's Hospital Sports Medicine physicians care for both competitive athletes and weekend warriors. Our physicians meet the highest standards possible in specialty training and are focused on the issues that affect athletes of all ages. Our board-certified pediatricians have completed a two-year accredited Sports Medicine fellowship and are among only 100 pediatricians nationwide who have earned their Certificate of Added Qualifications in Sports Medicine.

Common sports-related problems we care for:

- Acute injuries (ankle sprains, muscle strains, knee and shoulder injuries, and non-displaced fractures)
- Overuse injuries (tendonitis, stress fractures, and back pain)
- Growth plate injuries
- Mild traumatic brain injury (concussion) and other head injuries
- Athletes with chronic or acute illness such as infectious mononucleosis, asthma or diabetes
- "Return to play" decisions for the sick or injured athlete
- Athletes with eating issues, menstrual irregularity or bone density loss
- Nutrition, supplements, ergogenic aids and performance issues
- Specialized guidance for youth and women athletes
- Injury prevention for all ages
- Exercise guidance for patients who want to improve their fitness
- Pre-participation sports physicals
- Assessment of sport-specific needs in specialized populations, such as Special Olympics athletes

Locations

- University Hospitals
Case Medical Center – Bolwell Health Center
- University Hospitals Landerbrook Health Center
- University Hospitals
Chagrin Highlands Health Center
- University Hospitals
University Suburban Health Center
- University Hospitals Mentor Medical Center
- University Hospitals Westlake Health Center
- Southwest General Urgicare (Strongsville)

**It's not whether you win or lose.
It's how healthy you stay.**

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