

Take Home Concussion Information

ATI Concussion Care Team: (contact information)

Date: _____

Your athlete has been evaluated for a concussion today. This document is meant to give you basic information about concussions and how to care for them. If you have any further questions, please do not hesitate to call one of the above phone numbers and we would be happy to answer any further questions you might have.

Possible Signs/Symptoms resulting from a concussion: A concussion is a jarring injury of the brain resulting in disturbance of cerebral function. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Athletes who experience one or more of the following signs or symptoms after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play and evaluated by a health care professional who is experienced in evaluating concussions.

Headache	Nausea	Dizziness
Balance problems	Vomiting	Fatigue
Trouble falling asleep	Sleeping more than usual	Drowsiness
Sleeping less than usual	Sensitivity to light	Sensitivity to noise
Irritability	Sadness	Nervousness
Feeling more emotional	Numbness/tingling	Feeling slowed down
Feeling mentally foggy	Difficulty concentrating	Difficulty remembering
Visual problems	Loss of appetite	Unequal/dilated pupils
Loss of consciousness	Alterations in breathing pattern	Lethargic
Difficulty with/slurred speech		

The following Signs/Symptoms warrant immediate referral to the ER

Changes in alertness/consciousness	Convulsions/seizures
Muscle weakness on one or both sides	Any loss of consciousness
Persistent confusion	Repeated Vomiting
Unequal pupils	Unusual eye movements
Clear or bloody discharge from the ears	

What to do next

- Watch your athlete closely. If any of his/her symptoms seem to be getting worse or more keep showing up, they should be taken to the Emergency Room Immediately
- Keep your athlete quiet and relaxed. Minimize physical activity. Minimize stimulation such as TV, computer, phone, video games, etc. When doing homework, have him/her complete it in short time periods with frequent breaks.
- Your athlete needs sleep! Sleep is the best way for the brain to recover. You can check on him/her throughout the night if you would like to, but if they appear to be sleeping peacefully, let them sleep!
- Your athlete's concussion care can be managed through the athletic trainers that are members of the ATI Physical Therapy Concussion Care Team. Your liaison is a qualified member of the team and will be in frequent communication with you regarding the status of your child's progress. They will ensure a safe and timely return to play.
- Many times the needs of the athlete require them to see a physician. If this is the case, be sure to see a physician who has specific training in concussion management. If you need a recommendation please do not hesitate to call us.

Steps for Returning to play

- There are several steps to be taken and all of them are a piece of the puzzle to get your athlete returning to play as soon as SAFELY possible. No one athlete will respond to a concussion the same as another. Due to this, a specific date for returning to play cannot be set. A specific progression and monitoring of your athlete must be taken. Athletes can only progress one step in a day. Sometimes an athlete will be stuck at a step for several days. Please communicate daily with your athletic trainer from the Concussion Care Team. They will give you specific instructions on what to do for each step. Below is a general reference so you will have an idea of what to expect. **Please do NOT try to take an athlete through the return to play progression on your own.**

STEP 1: After it has been determined your athlete has a concussion, the first thing we will do is rest until the athlete is symptom free for a full 24 hours. No physical activity can be resumed until the athlete is symptom free. This includes practice and games for the sport they are in, Physical Education, and exercising on their own. The athlete should not do anything more strenuous than walking until all symptoms have ceased. When the athlete has been symptom free for 24 hours, then he/she can take the Impact post injury test. Their post injury test will be compared to their baseline test, if one is available, or to normative numbers if no baseline has been completed. Based on the results from Impact test, will either continue to rest, or progress to step #2.

STEP 2: Once all symptoms have gone away the athlete can participate in light exertion activities under the supervision of either ATC or parent/coach. If the athlete can finish light exertion activities without experiencing any return of symptoms, they can move onto the next step.

STEP 3: The athlete will participate in activities which exert them a little more and sport-specific activities, again under the supervision of the ATC or parent/coach. If the athlete can complete this without experiencing any return of symptoms, they can move onto the next step.

STEP 4: The athlete will now be able to participate in heavy exertion activities such as running or a non-contact practice with his/her team.

- * **Illinois legislation states, "a student athlete who has been removed from play may not return to play until the student athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and head injuries and the student athlete receives WRITTEN CLEARANCE to return to play from that health care provider."**
- The healthcare provider can be a physician or a certified athletic trainer (ATI Physical Therapy Concussion care team). Please bear in mind that the physician should be well versed in the evaluation and management of concussions. Also, if your athlete receives care from a physician, the ATI Physical Therapy concussion care team would like to work in conjunction with that physician to return your athlete to play as soon as safely possible.
- Please note that even with a Doctor's clearance note, it is advised that all athletes still complete the four step return to play protocol, as advised by your concussion care team liaison.

Step 5: Athlete can complete a full practice (including contact activities) with the team

Step 6: Athlete can return to full participation, including games, with no restrictions.

If at any point the athlete's symptoms return, physical activity will stop for that day. Assuming the symptoms are gone the following day, the same step will be attempted again.

If you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact a member of the ATI Physical therapy concussion care team. Our goal is to have your athlete back to participation as soon as safely possible.
Thank you,

ATI Physical Therapy Concussion Care Team