

Ringette Canada Pre-Season Concussion Education information

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that affects the way an athlete thinks and behaves. Concussions occur as a result of a direct or indirect blow to the head or an impact to the body that causes a sudden severe movement to the head. With a concussion, there is no visible injury to the structure of the brain, meaning that tests like an MRI or a CT scan usually appear normal.

WHAT MIGHT I SEE IF A PERSON HAS A CONCUSSION?

- Lying motionless on the ice
- Trouble skating or walking
- Clutching head
- Uncoordinated movement
- Slow to get up after an impact
- Blank or vacant stare
- Balance problems
- Disorientation or confusion; inappropriate responses

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

 THINKING/ REMEMBERING	 PHYSICAL	 EMOTIONAL/ MOOD	 SLEEP DISTURBANCE
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficulty thinking clearly • Feeling slowed down • Difficulty concentrating • Difficulty remembering new information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Headache • Nausea or vomiting (early on) • Balance problems • Dizziness • Fuzzy or blurry vision • Feeling tired, having no energy • Sensitivity to noise or light 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Irritability • Sadness • More emotional • Nervousness or anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sleeping more than usual • Sleeping less than usual • Trouble falling asleep

REMEMBER:

- A concussion can result from a direct hit to the head or an impact to the body
- Loss of consciousness is not required for a concussion to occur
- Concussion signs and symptoms may appear after 24-48 hours following an impact

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT A CONCUSSION?

If any athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion during sports they should be immediately removed from play. Any athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion during sports must not be allowed to return to the same game or practice.



It is important that ALL athletes with a suspected concussion undergo medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible. It is also important that ALL athletes with a suspected concussion receive written medical clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before resuming full contact Ringette practice

WHEN CAN THE ATHLETE RETURN TO SCHOOL AND SPORTS?

It is important that all athletes diagnosed with a concussion follow a step-wise return to school and sports- related activities that includes the following Return-to-School and Return-to-Sport Strategies. It is important that youth and adult student-athletes return to full-time school activities before progressing to stage 5 and 6 of the Return-to-Sport Strategy.

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT CONCUSSIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES?

Concussion prevention, recognition and management require athletes to follow the rules and regulations of their sport, respect their opponents, avoid head contact, and report suspected concussions.

Post-Concussion Protocols:

Return-to-School Strategy¹

The chart below should be used to help student-athletes, parents, and teachers to partner in allowing the athlete to make a gradual return to school activities. Depending on the severity and type of the symptoms present, student-athletes will progress through the following stages at different rates. If the student-athlete experiences new symptoms or worsening symptoms at any stage, they should go back to the previous stage.

Stage	Aim	Activity	Stage Goal
1	Daily activities at home that do not give the student- athlete symptoms	Typical activities during the day as long as they do not increase symptoms (i.e. reading, texting, screen time). Start at 5-15 minutes at a time and gradually build up.	Gradual return to typical activities
2	School activities	Homework, reading or other cognitive activities outside of the classroom.	Increase tolerance to cognitive work.
3	Return to school part-time	Gradual introduction of schoolwork. May need to start with a partial school day or with increased breaks during the day.	Increase academic activities.
4	Return to school full-time	Gradually progress school activities until a full day can be tolerated	Return to full academic activities and catch up on missed school work.

¹ Modified from Parachute. (2017). *Canadian Guideline on Concussion in Sport*. Toronto: Parachute.



Ringette-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy

The chart below should be used to help athletes, coaches, trainers, and medical professionals to partner in allowing the athlete to make a gradual return to sport activities.

If the athlete experiences new symptoms or worsening symptoms at any stage, they should go back to the previous stage. It is important that youth and adult student-athletes return to full-time school activities before progressing to stage 5 and 6 of the *Ringette-Specific Return-to-Sport Strategy*. All athletes must provide their coach with a second *Concussion Assessment Medical Report Form* prior to returning to full contact sport activities.

Stage	Aim	Activity	Stage Goal
0	Rest	24-48 hours of physical and cognitive rest	Rest
1	Symptom-limiting activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms.	Gradual re-introduction of work/school activities
Once concussion related symptoms have resolved:			
2	Light aerobic activity	Walking, light jogging, swimming or stationary cycling at slow to medium pace. No resistance training.	Increase heart rate
3	Ringette-specific exercise	Training activities such as skating drills. No head impact activities or resistance training.	Add movement
4	Non-contact training drills	Harder training drills, i.e. passing drills, change of direction, shooting. May start resistance training.	Exercise, coordination and increased thinking
Repeat medical assessment and clearance with second Concussion Assessment Medical Report Form			
5	Full contact practice	Participation in full practice without activity restriction	Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff
6	Game play	Normal game play. Player rehabilitated	

How long will it take for concussion recovery?

Most athletes who sustain a concussion will make a complete recovery within 1-2 weeks

Most youth athletes will recover within 1-4 weeks.

Approximately 15-30% of patients will experience persistent symptoms (2 or more weeks for adults; 4 or more weeks for youth) that may require additional medical assessment and management.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONCUSSIONS PLEASE VISIT:

Parachute Canada: www.parachutecanada.org/concussion

SIGNATURES:The following signatures certify that the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian have reviewed the above information related to concussion.

Printed name of athlete

Signature of athlete

Date

Printed name of parent

Signature of parent

Date