

# Trending Now: Concussions

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Concussions can be caused by a blow or jolt to the head or a collision to the body which allows the head to move back and forth. The mechanism of injury could be explained by the anatomy of the skull and brain. The brain sits inside the skull surrounded by fluid, and when the head is suddenly stopped by a blow or collision, the brain inside will slam against the side of the skull and cause a temporary brain injury. We are correct to think football is the number one sport in which concussions occur. What is surprising is that girls' soccer is the number two sport with concussion as injury.

The symptoms of this injury can range from dizziness, headaches, nausea, feeling foggy or sluggish, and concentration problems. Signs that a parent or coach can observe include an athlete who is stunned, confused, forgetful or behaves differently. The state of Iowa provides a fact sheet for all parents and athletes called HEADS UP: Concussion in High School Sports. It can be found at

[http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports\\_Medicine\\_Wellness/Concussions/HEADS\\_UP\\_CONCUSSION\\_FACT\\_SHEET\\_053012.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports_Medicine_Wellness/Concussions/HEADS_UP_CONCUSSION_FACT_SHEET_053012.pdf). This information allows better communication for all involved, from coaches to parents to the athlete.

One of the newer trends is baseline testing. This concept allows the medical team to have a recorded normal test so when the athlete happens to have a concussion they can compare the normal test to the concussed test. This information will help the medical team with return to play guidelines. These tests could be in the form of a computerize test such as impact testing, or a paper test, sport concussion assessment tool 2 (SCAT 2). This test would usually be given during the sports physical that each athlete must have before the season starts.

The question most parents have is: When can my child come back to play after a concussion? The best answer for that is: When all the symptoms of the concussion have resolved and after the athlete can perform sport-specific activities without any symptoms. Additional information from the Iowa High School Athletic Association is at

[http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports\\_Medicine\\_Wellness/Concussions/Concussion RTP Protocol 052212.pdf](http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports_Medicine_Wellness/Concussions/Concussion RTP Protocol 052212.pdf). You'll find other helpful information at [http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports\\_Medicine\\_Wellness/Concussions/concussions.html](http://www.iahsaa.org/Sports_Medicine_Wellness/Concussions/concussions.html).

Remember, any head injury is a possible serious brain injury and should be taken seriously. Today the sports medicine world has taken major steps in trying to inform and protect all athletes. Concussions can be treated, and athletes can recover and play again if we take the proper steps to inform ourselves and allow the athlete to recover from the injury.