

Lodi Upward Cheer & Basketball California Concussion Information Sheet

Why am I getting this information sheet? You are receiving this information sheet about concussions because of California state law AB 25.

1. The law requires an athlete who may have a concussion during a practice or game to be removed from the activity for the remainder of the day.
2. Any athlete removed for this reason must receive a written note from a physician trained in the management of concussion before returning to practice.
3. Before an athlete can start the season and begin practice in a sport, a concussion information sheet must be signed and returned to the league by the athlete and the parent or guardian.

What is a concussion and how would I recognize one?

A concussion is a kind of brain injury. It can be caused by a bump or hit to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force that shakes the head. Concussions can appear in any sport, and can look differently in each person.

Most concussions get better with rest and over 90% of athletes fully recover. However, all concussions should be considered serious. If not recognized and managed the right way, they may result in problems including brain damage and even death.

Most concussions occur without being knocked out. Signs and symptoms of concussion (see back of this page) may show up right after the injury or can take hours to appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion or if you notice some symptoms and signs, seek medical evaluation from your team's athletic trainer and a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussion. If your child is vomiting, has a severe headache, or is having difficulty staying awake or answering simple questions, call 911 for immediate transport to the emergency department of your local hospital.

On the CIF website is a Graded Concussion Symptom Checklist. If your child fills this out after having had a concussion, it helps the physician, athletic trainer or coach understand how they are feeling and hopefully will show improvement over time. You may have your child fill out the checklist at the start of the season even before a concussion has occurred so that we can understand if some symptoms such as headache might be a part of their everyday life. We call this a "baseline" so that we know what symptoms are normal and common for your child. Keep a copy for your records, and turn in the original. If a concussion occurs, your child can fill out this checklist again. This Graded Symptom Checklist provides a list of symptoms to compare over time to follow your child's recovery from the concussion.

What can happen if my child keeps playing with concussion symptoms or returns too soon after getting a concussion?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. There is NO same day return to play for a youth with a suspected concussion. Youth athletes may take more time to recover from concussion and are more prone to long-term serious problems from a concussion.

Even though a traditional brain scan (e.g., MRI or CT) may be “normal”, the brain has still been injured. Animal and human research studies show that a second blow before the brain has recovered can result in serious damage to the brain. If your athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one, this can lead to prolonged recovery (weeks to months), or even to severe brain swelling (Second Impact Syndrome) with devastating consequences.

There is an increasing concern that head impact exposure and recurrent concussions may contribute to long-term neurological problems. One goal of concussion education is to prevent a too early return to play so that serious brain damage can be prevented.

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Looks dizzy
- Slurred speech
- Looks spaced out
- Shows a change in personality or way of acting
- Confused about plays
- Can't recall events before or after the injury
- Forgets plays
- Seizures or “has a fit”
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Moves clumsily or awkwardly
- Passes out
- Answers questions slowly

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- Loss of memory
- “Pressure in head”
- “Don't feel right”
- Nausea or throws up
- Tired or low energy
- Neck pain
- Sadness
- Has trouble standing or walking
- Nervousness or feeling on edge
- Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
- Irritability
- Bothered by light or noise
- More emotional
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Confused
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Drowsiness
- Repeating the same question/comment
- Change in sleep patterns

How is Return to Play (RTP) determined?

Concussion symptoms should be completely gone before returning to competition. A RTP progression is a gradual, step-wise increase in physical effort, sports-specific activities and then finally unrestricted activities. If symptoms worsen with activity, the progression should be stopped. If there are no symptoms the next day, exercise can be restarted at the previous stage.

RTP after concussion should occur only with medical clearance from a physician trained in the evaluation and management of concussions, and a step-wise progression program monitored by an athletic trainer or coach. [AB 2127, a California state law effective 1/1/15, states that return to play (i.e., full competition) must be no sooner than 7 days after the concussion diagnosis has been made by a physician.]

Final Thoughts for Parents and Guardians: It is well known that athletes will often not talk about signs of concussions, which is why this information sheet is so important to review with them. Teach your child to tell the coaching staff if they experience such symptoms, or if they suspect that a teammate has had a concussion. You should also feel comfortable talking to the coaches about possible concussion signs and symptoms that you may be seeing in your child.

References:

- *American Medical Society for Sports Medicine position statement: concussion in sport (2013)*
- *Consensus statement on concussion in sport: the 4th International Conference on Concussion in Sport held in Berlin, October 2016*
- <https://www.cdc.gov/traumaticbraininjury/PediatricmTBIGuideline.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/headsup/youthsports/index.html>

(adapted from CIF document:

https://cifstate.org/sports-medicine/concussions/CIF_Concussion_Info_Sheet.pdf)

Return to upward sports registration and click that you have read and accepted the California Concussion Information Sheet during the registration process.