

St. Anne's – Belfield School
Concussion Information for Parent/Guardian
Appendix I

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. A concussion can be caused by a blow to the head or body, which causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Concussions affect the metabolic processes of the brain. This means that the chemicals are not reacting with each other the way they should. All concussions are a serious medical concern, even “getting your bell rung”. MRI’s and CT’s are good for ruling out more time sensitive injuries such as bleeding in/around the brain or a skull fracture, however they do not diagnose a concussion. Signs and symptoms of a concussion can show immediately or may not show up for days or weeks later. If a student reports any symptoms of a concussion or you recognize any signs, seek medical attention as soon as possible.

<u>Observed Signs:</u>	<u>Reported Symptoms:</u>
• Appears dazed or confused	• Headache or feeling of pressure
• Does not understand simple instructions	• Vision problem
• Does not have short term recall	• Nauseous
• Appears clumsy or disoriented	• Feeling dizzy or in a fog
• Appears irritable or fatigued	• Complains of light or noise sensitivity
• Slow to answer questions	• Complains of ringing in the ears
• Appears more emotional	• Complains of problems concentrating
• Vomiting	• Complains of problems remembering
• Does not recall events before or after injury	•
• Has balance problems	•

Parent/Guardian Role

It is important to learn the signs/symptoms because you may be the first to notice changes in your child. You should also encourage your child to learn the common signs/symptoms and explain the importance of reporting any possible concussion to a coach, athletic trainer or faculty member. If you suspect your child has a concussion, you should notify your child’s primary care physician, coach (if appropriate), and your child’s homeroom teacher/advisor. **If your child has a worsening headache, dilated or unequal pupils, loss of consciousness, vomiting, slurred speech or any seizure activity you should seek emergency medical care.** To help lessen the symptoms and shorten recovery time, you should limit your child’s exposure to loud noises, bright lights, computers, video games, televisions and phones.

Return to School and Normal Daily Activity

Rest is the key to proper healing following a concussion. Decreasing the stress on the brain early after a concussion may lessen symptoms and shorten recovery time. Most students will have difficulty with concentration, memory, and processing, which all negatively affect school performance. A decline in performance may cause even greater mental strain on the student. This increased strain can cause symptoms to worsen and negatively affect healing of the brain. Return to school should be done as a progression of gradually increasing periods of time. Avoidance of areas or times of extreme noise or overstimulation should be encouraged, including noisy hallways or cafeterias as well as group socializing. The division head, homeroom teacher/advisor and any other appropriate faculty member(s) will work with the parents, student and treating physician to individualize the care plan to best suit the needs of the concussed student.

Return to Play for Student Athletes

If your child has been removed from activity due to a suspected concussion he/she must have a written medical release from his/her licensed health care provider. The written medical release shall certify that the provider is aware of the current medical guidance on concussion evaluation and management. Upon obtaining written medical release from the student's licensed health care provider the student must then be monitored by the athletic trainer to ensure that the student no longer exhibits signs/symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion at rest or with exertion. Once the student no longer exhibits any signs/symptoms consistent with a concussion, the student must successfully complete a progressive return to sports participation program with the supervision of the athletic trainer. Each stage of the return to sports participation program should take 24 hours to complete. At minimum the student will not return to full participation for seven (7) days.

Concussions can be a life threatening injury and should be treated with care. Some signs/symptoms will resolve immediately, others will linger for days or weeks. It is important that the student does not return to activity before he/she is completely healed from the concussion. If a student obtains a second blow to the head before he/she is healed from the initial brain injury, then the possibility of long term effects is greater and there is a chance of incurring **Second Impact Syndrome (SIS)**. SIS occurs when the student sustains a second concussion before the initial injury has healed. This causes rapid brain swelling, long term effects on brain function and can be fatal.

Short Term Effects

After a student sustains one concussion, they are more likely to sustain a second one, compared to others that have not been concussed. Repeat concussions, even when mild, can increase the risk of post-concussive symptoms, such as headaches, memory loss, difficulty concentrating, behavior or personality changes, extreme fatigue, etc. These symptoms may last only short time or could remain a problem to the student for months or longer.

Long Term Effects

Very little is known about the long term effects of concussions however, more research is focusing on this area in the past several years. Some studies of NFL football players link a history of concussions to degeneration of brain cells, dementia and/or Alzheimer's, as well as depression. Effects of sports concussion in early adulthood have been shown to persist beyond 30 years and can cause cognitive and motor function alteration.

Websites of Interest

http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/headsup/high_school.html

Video: Outside the Lines on ESPN (<http://espn.go.com/video/clip?id=3094263>)

Video: Brandon's Story (http://www.cdc.gov/TraumaticBrainInjury/CTK_Video_WM_BB.html)

A Parent's Guide to Concussion in Sports (<http://www.nfhs.org>)



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I, _____ parent/guardian of, _____
have received, reviewed and understand the information on concussions. I agree to work in coordination
with the coaches, teachers, certified athletic trainer and administrators of St. Anne's – Belfield School in order
to provide a safe environment for my child as well as all students at the School.

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date

Printed Name of Parent/Guardian

Printed Name of Student