

Best Practices for Removal of Athlete from an Athletic Event (Practice/Game) Due to Head Injury

1. Remove the Athlete From Play.

Look for the signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head. Athletes who experience signs or symptoms of concussion should not be allowed to return to play. When in doubt, keep the athlete out of play.

2. Ensure that the athlete is evaluated right away by an appropriate health care professional with experience.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:

Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head

Any loss of consciousness (passed out/ knocked out) and if so, for how long

Any memory loss immediately following the injury

Any seizures immediately following the injury

Number of previous concussions (if any)

3. Inform the athlete's parents or guardians about the possible concussion.

Make sure they know that the athlete should be seen by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.

4. Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury.

Do not return the athlete to play or practice until a health care professional, experienced in evaluating/managing concussion, has cleared them to do so in writing. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain recovers from the first may slow recovery or increase the likelihood of having long-term problems. Prevent common long-term problems and the rare second impact syndrome by delaying the athlete's return to the activity until the player receives appropriate medical evaluation and approval for return to play.

Steps for Returning an Athlete to an Athletic Activity (Practice/Game) After a Head Injury.

A club player that is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury in any training session or game ("athletic activity") shall immediately be removed from the athletic activity and shall not be permitted to return to any athletic activity until he or she is evaluated by a licensed health care provider and receives written clearance to return to athletic activity from the health care provider ("Written Clearance").

If the licensed health care provider determines that the player sustained a concussion or other head injury, the player shall also complete a graduated return-to-play protocol of no less than seven days in duration under the supervision of a licensed health care provider.

SOURCE: NORCAL PREMIER SOCCER

INJURY REPORT FORM: <http://norcalpremier.com/resources/head-injury-prevention-protocol/>