HEADS UP
CONCUSSION
IN YOUTH SPORTS

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?
A concussion is a brain injury that:
• Is caused by a bump or blow to the head
• Can change the way your brain normally works
• Can occur during practices or games in any sport
• Can happen even if you haven’t been knocked out
• Can be serious even if you’ve just been "dinged"

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?
• Headache or “pressure” in head
• Nausea or vomiting
• Balance problems or dizziness
• Double or blurry vision
• Bothered by light
• Bothered by noise
• Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
• Difficulty paying attention
• Memory problems
• Confusion
• Does not “feel right”

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I HAVE A CONCUSSION?
• Tell your coaches and your parents. Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.

GET A MEDICAL CHECK UP. A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.

GIVE YOURSELF TIME TO GET BETTER. If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second or later concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

HOW CAN I PREVENT A CONCUSSION?
Every sport is different, but there are steps you can take to protect yourself.
• Follow your coach’s rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
• Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
• Use the proper sports equipment, including personal protective equipment (such as helmets, padding, shin guards, and eye and mouth guards). In order for equipment to protect you, it must be:
  • The right equipment for the game, position, or activity
  • Worn correctly and fit well
  • Used every time you play

It’s better to miss one game than the whole season.

For more information and to order additional materials free-of-charge, visit: www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports

For more detailed information on concussion and traumatic brain injury, visit: www.cdc.gov/Injury