

UNDERSTANDING CONCUSSIONS

Educational Material for Parents and Students

(Content Meets MDCH Requirements)

Sources: Michigan Department of Community Health, CDC and the National Operating Committee on Standards for Athletic Equipment (NOCSAE), National Athletic Trainers Association

Some Common Symptoms				
Headache	Balance Problems	Sensitivity to Noise	Poor Concentration	Not "Feeling Right"
Pressure in the Head	Double Vision	Sluggishness	Memory Problems	Feeling Irritable
Nausea/Vomiting	Blurry Vision	Haziness	Confusion	Slow Reaction Time
Dizziness	Sensitivity to Light	Fogginess	"Feeling Down"	Sleep Problems
		Grogginess		

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a fall, bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. A concussion can be caused by a shaking, spinning for a sudden stopping and starting of the head. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. A concussion can happen even if you haven't been knocked out.

You can't see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussions can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days or weeks after the injury. If the student reports any symptoms of a concussion, or if you notice symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away. A student who may have had a concussion should not return to activity on the day of the injury and not until a health care professional says they are okay to return to activity.

IF YOU SUSPECT A CONCUSSION:

1. **SEEK MEDICAL ATTENTION RIGHT AWAY**-A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for the student to return to regular activities, including sports. Don't hide it, report it. Ignoring symptoms and trying to "tough it out" often makes it worse.
2. **KEEP YOUR STUDENT OUT OF ACTIVITY**-Concussions take time to heal. Don't let the student return to activity the day of the injury and not until a health professional says it is okay. A student who returns to activity too soon, while the brain is still healing, risks a greater chance of having a second concussion. Young children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults. Repeat or second concussions increase the time it takes to recover and can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting the student for a lifetime. They can be fatal.
3. **TELL THE SCHOOL ABOUT ANY PREVIOUS CONCUSSION(S)**-Schools should know if a student had a previous concussion. A student's school may not know about a concussion received in another sport or activity unless you notify them.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused or has trouble with homework or school assignments
- Forgets an instruction
- Can't recall events prior to or after a hit or fall
- Appears fatigued
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior or personality changes

CONCUSSION DANGER SIGNS:

In rare cases, a dangerous blood clot may form on the brain in a person with a concussion and crowd the brain against the skull. If a student sustains a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body and the following danger signs are present, **immediate medical attention** should be sought at the closest emergency department.

• One pupil larger than the other	• Repeated vomiting or nausea	• Becomes increasingly confused or agitated	• Is drowsy and cannot be awakened
• Slurred speech	• Has unusual behavior	• A headache that gets worse	• Convulsions or seizures
• Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination	• Cannot recognize people or places	• Loses consciousness (even briefly)	

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO?

If a student reports one or more symptoms of a concussion after receiving a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body, h/she should be immediately removed from activity (this includes but is not limited to, athletics, PE classes, band, dance, aerobics, theatre and choir.) The student should only return to activity with the permission of a health care professional experienced in evaluating concussions. Rest is key during recovery. Exercising or activities that require a lot of concentration (such as studying, working on the computer or playing video games) may cause concussion symptoms to reappear or get worse. Students who return to school after a concussion may need to spend fewer hours at school, take rest breaks, be given extra help and time, and spend less time reading, writing or on a computer or iPad. After a concussion, returning to sports and school is a gradual process and should be monitored by a health care professional. Concussions affect each individual differently. Some may recover quickly and fully while others may have symptoms that last for days, weeks or even months.

To learn more, go to www.cdc.gov/concussion

PARENTS AND STUDENTS MUST SIGN AND RETURN THE EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

CONCUSSION AWARENESS

EDUCATIONAL MATERIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

By my name and signature below, I acknowledge in accordance with Public Acts 342 and 343 of 2012 that I have received and reviewed the "Understanding Concussions: Education for Parents and Athletes" provided by Gaylord Community Schools.

Student Name Printed

Parent or Guardian Name Printed

Student Name Signature

Parent or Guardian Name Signature

Date

Date

Return this signed form to your school's athletic office or to your coach. The school must keep this on file until the student is age 18. We realize this may not be the first nor the last time you sign and submit this form, as each organization needs to have a copy. Thank you for your cooperation and understanding.

Students and parents please review and keep the educational materials available for future reference.