



4 April 2020

What to do after a suspected concussion

In the case of a suspected concussion in a school child:

- The player must be removed from the field and not partake in any further play that day
- A responsible adult should accompany and monitor the player
- If the player is stable and symptoms mild, he/she may be monitored at school or at home
- If the player's condition is severe or deteriorates, refer to a doctor or hospital emergency room

In particular, look for "RED FLAG" signs

- Headaches that worsen
- Severe neck pain
- Loss of feeling or use of an arm or leg
- Confusion
- Slurred speech
- Deteriorating consciousness
- Seizures (fits)
- Repeated vomiting

I may be contacted on my mobile number **082-5746918** if advice is needed.

On the sideline:

- Have the player rest while being monitored by a responsible adult
- **Complete a SCAT5** after the match or practice; keep a copy and send a copy to the player – it is useful for follow up medical consultations.
- Give the accompanying **Concussion Advice Sheet** to all concussed players.

All suspected concussions **must be cleared by a doctor** before returning to sport.

After the match/training:

In the coming days, the player should be **evaluated by one of our doctors** at the **Sports Concussion Clinics**: Waterfall 011-3047723 / Rosebank 011-4428233; mention that it is a suspected concussion whether the child is or is not part of the **Schools Concussion Programme**.

At the medical evaluation, the player will undergo a clinical assessment (symptom evaluation, general and neurological examination, verbal cognitive tests, balance assessment, ocular and vestibular screen) and a CogState Sport computerised cognitive test that can be compared to baseline if one has been done this year.

After this advice will be given regarding:

- Return to school (Refer to the ‘Return-to-school Guidelines’)
- Return to exercise
- Return to sport (School physios and bios may help managed this using the attached “Return-to-sport” guidelines)
- The need for specialised assessment and/or rehabilitation (e.g. physiotherapy/optometry/neurology)
- Repeat consultations.

Importantly, each case is managed independently rather than using a return-to-play template.

If symptoms such as headache, dizziness, nausea and tiredness are present, **avoid school for the next 48 hours** while the medical appointment is being arranged or until cleared by a doctor to return to class.

Remember: “If in doubt, sit it out” but

Early, light exercise that does not worsen symptoms is fine; this includes stationary cycling and walking for 20-3- minutes.

Our aim is to return the player to sport as soon as it is safe.

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