

## CONCUSSION PATIENT INSTRUCTIONS

Your son or daughter sustained a **concussion**. A concussion is a mild injury to the brain. It causes **confusion, memory loss, and imbalance**. It can also cause nausea, headache, dizziness, tiredness, vomiting only a few times, and initial loss of consciousness.

Concussion does *not* cause loss of consciousness later than the initial injury. It also does *not* cause worsening symptoms. It does *not* typically cause permanent damage. Occasionally, with numerous concussions, athletes can develop some slowing of thought processes.

You or your child has been monitored carefully since the head injury. His/her condition has improved. Care has been taken to determine he or she does not have an injury worse than concussion. Examples of worse injuries are skull fracture, neck injury, and bleeding in the brain. These worse injuries cause symptoms that worsen during the monitoring period. CT scans can identify these other injuries. Your physician will order a CT scan if there is reason to do it. ***CT scans do not tell anything about concussion. CT scans do not say when it is safe to resume exercise.***

Concussions generally improve and resolve. Mild concussions might resolve in minutes or hours. Moderate concussions can take several days to one week. More severe concussions can last longer.

The best treatment is **time and rest**. Exercising before recovery can prolong the illness and delay the athlete's return to competition. A rare complication is "second impact syndrome." In this condition, a second head injury occurs before the first injury resolved. The brain swells in minutes, and the victim often dies within 30 minutes. Therefore, be sure a qualified physician has determined returning to sports is safe.

Athletes with *symptoms that do not improve* are sent to the emergency department. Likewise, go to the emergency department if any *new or worsened symptom* arises. Otherwise, **follow up with your physician as instructed**.

After a concussion, a post-concussion syndrome can develop. The individual feels tired, loses some motivation, and sometimes feels depressed. This syndrome will resolve in time. It is important to recognize post-concussion syndrome. Those with post-concussion syndrome who follow up regularly with a qualified physician recover faster than those who do not follow up.

The Sports Medicine Team at Accelerated Rehabilitation Center  
24 Hour Sports Injury Hotline: