



Student Athlete

Home Care for a Head Injury or Concussion

An athlete who has experienced a head injury or concussion may have signs and symptoms that do not become apparent until hours after the initial traumatic event. At the time of injury, hospitalization may not have been required. However, you should be alert for possible signs and symptoms in the athlete. Seek medical attention immediately if you observe any changes of these symptoms:

- Headache (especially one that increases in intensity) or headache that is persistent
- Any period of loss of consciousness
- Seizure activity
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Drowsiness, lethargy or sleepiness
- Memory deficits
- Mental confusion/disorientation or inability to focus attention (easily distracted)
- Emotions out of proportion to circumstances
- Delayed verbal and motor responses/slurred speech
- Feeling “foggy”
- Gross observable lack of coordination (such as changes in gait or balance)
- Vacant stare (puzzled facial expressions)
- Blurry or double vision
- One pupil larger than the other from right to left eye, or dilated pupils
- Bleeding and/or clear fluid from the nose or ears
- Ringing in the ears

The best guideline is to note ***symptoms that worsen*** and behaviors that seem to represent a change in your son or daughter. If you have any question or concern about the symptoms you are observing, contact your family physician for instructions, or seek medical attention at the closest emergency department.

A person with a concussion may:

- Use acetaminophen (Tylenol®) for headaches
- Use ice pack on head and neck as needed for comfort
- Eat a light diet
- Go to sleep
- Rest (no strenuous activity or sports)



Texas Health
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FORT WORTH

There is no need to:

- Wake up every hour
- Test reflexes
- Stay in bed

Do not:

- Drink alcohol
- Drive while symptomatic
- Exercise or lift weights
- Use computer or text message
- Watch TV for long periods of time
- Take ibuprofen, aspirin, naproxen or other non-steroidal anti-inflammatory medications

Lights Out on Electronics

The use of computers, TV and phone, including texting, can delay the brain's healing process. Restriction from using these items as well as avoidance of concerts and loud music may improve healing time. During the next few days, limit TV time and only non-violent programs.

Academic Accommodation

The school administrators (principals, counselors and teachers) should be contacted and informed that the student athlete has sustained a concussion. Request "academic accommodation" such as excuse from classes and homework for a few days. This should occur until the symptoms diminish. Please remind your child to check in with the school nurse prior to going to class on the first day he or she returns to school.

Your child should also follow up with the school's athletic trainer and should be restricted from participating until the symptoms resolve and a physician has cleared them to return to play. Return to play should be gradual and increase in stress over a period of a few days. If signs or symptoms return with workouts, then restrict from exercise until the athlete is able to work out without symptoms returning.

Physicians recommend neurocognitive testing as a tool to determine safe return-to-play time lines. This online test is easily implemented in the office of a physician certified in ImPACT (www.impacttest.com). For help finding an ImPACT-certified physician, and for more information about sports therapy call the Texas Health Ben Hogan Sports Medicine program at: **817-250-7500**.

This brochure is provided for information only and is not intended as medical advice. For advice about your specific medical condition, contact your physician. Physicians on the medical staff practice independently and are not employees or agents of the hospital.

Source: www.impacttest.com; American Academy of Neurology

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