

# HEADS UP CONCUSSION



Centers for Disease  
Control and Prevention  
National Center for Injury  
Prevention and Control

## SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

Athletes who experience one or more of the signs or symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body may have a concussion.

### › SIGNS OBSERVED BY COACHING STAFF

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

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### › SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is "feeling down"

## ACTION PLAN

As a coach, if you think an athlete may have a concussion, you should:

1. **Remove the athlete** from play.
2. **Keep an athlete with a possible concussion out of play on the same day of the injury and until cleared by a health care provider.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a health care provider should assess an athlete for a possible concussion.
3. **Record and share information about the injury**, such as how it happened and the athlete's symptoms, to help a health care provider assess the athlete.
4. **Inform the athlete's parent(s) or guardian(s)** about the possible concussion and refer them to CDC's website for concussion information.
5. **Ask for written instructions from the athlete's health care provider** about the steps you should take to help the athlete safely return to play. Before returning to play an athlete should:
  - › Be back to doing their regular school activities.
  - › Not have any symptoms from the injury when doing normal activities.
  - › Have the green-light from their health care provider to begin the return to play process.

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For more information and to order additional materials **free-of-charge**, visit: [www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP](http://www.cdc.gov/HEADSUP).

*The information provided in this document or through linkages to other sites is not a substitute for medical or professional care. Questions about diagnosis and treatment for concussion should be directed to a physician or other health care provider.*

**IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.**