

**CITY OF DENTON ADULT SOFTBALL
 RULES AND REGULATIONS**
(updated 1/2026)

All league games will be played in accordance with the designated governing body, USA/ASA Softball rules with the following modifications. The City of Denton Parks & Recreation department reserves the right to add, delete, or amend the rules and regulations or policies for the betterment of the program. For all league schedules, standings and registration info visit: www.teamsideline.com/denton

I. League Game Info and Policies:

1. **USA/ASA Divisions – 8 Game Guarantee, Single Elimination Playoffs (Only top half advance)**
 - a. **Tuesday:** Men's C & D Divisions
 - b. **Wednesday:** Men's C & Co-Ed for Fun
 - c. **Sunday:** Co-Ed Rec, Co-Ed for Fun, Men's D Divisions

Double Header League, 8 Game Guarantee, (Double Elimination Tournament)

 - a. **Monday:** Men's C & D Divisions
 - b. **Thursday:** Men's C & D Divisions
2. **Divisions:**
 - a. C Teams are composed of tournament players of above average skills or better.
 - b. D Teams are composed of tournaments and/or league players of average skill.
 - c. E Teams is strictly Recreational and composed players of beginner skill level.
 - d. Co-Ed For Fun is designed for teams that enjoy softball as a form of recreation and are not concerned about win/loss record. This division is offered at a reduced rate, and only includes one umpire. It does not include playoffs or awards.
 - e. Managers will have the option of designating their choice of league and night of play at registration. The City of Denton reserves the right to upgrade or reassign a team's league preference based on past performance, team's skill level, and/or to assist with a league making.
3. All schedules, standings, game results, league information, and communication will be posted on www.teamsideline.com/denton . Please register for notification updates and inform all players about the website. City of Denton reserves the ability to make changes to any league related items throughout the duration of the season. Any changes will be communicated to coaches/managers in advance via email and/or phone.
4. League administrators will begin formulating league schedules the day after the registration period concludes. Once league schedules have been posted on www.teamsideline.com/denton , league administrators will not reschedule games at the request of any team or coach.
5. **Rainouts:** The field condition line is **(940) 349-8276** and will be updated by 4pm during the week and 9am on weekends if field conditions are questionable. If games are called due to weather, no one is allowed on the fields for practice or scrimmage. League discretion means that at 4pm the fields are playable, and if games were to be canceled it would not be until the umpires make the call at the fields. Please do not call the Athletics' Office to find out game status. If games are called at the fields, then everyone is to exit the complex immediately. One week of rainouts will be rescheduled and played at the end of the regular season schedule and before the playoffs are set to begin in your division.
6. **Excessive rainouts:** In the event of multiple rainouts, league administrators reserve the right to schedule on alternate nights if necessary. Every attempt will be made to schedule all make-up games on your league night. The Athletics Office reserves the right to schedule 30-minute "speed" games if the makeup games that have already been scheduled are again rained out. Speed games will allow two (2) weeks to be played in one. Speed games will have a 30-minute time limit and

each batter with start with a 2 – 2 count. It is your responsibility to contact the Athletics' Office or check the league website to find out the playoff seeds or rainout rescheduled dates, time, and field.

7. **Refund Policy:** Once registration ends, partial credits or refunds will not be given for any reason unless we are unable to make a division. This includes any make-up games and/or speed games that your team is unable to make.
8. **Forfeiture Policy:** As a courtesy to the team you are playing, please contact the PARD Athletic office by noon on your game day to let us know if you are forfeiting. This will give us enough time to contact the team you're playing and make umpire's and score keepers aware of the forfeit.
 - a. A 10-minute grace period will be given before a forfeit is called. However, the time will start running at game time and no extra time will be added if a team shows up.
 - b. If both teams do not have enough players at their scheduled game time, that game will be declared a double forfeit. Each team will receive a loss in the standing
 - c. Teams receiving wins by forfeits, will not be given credit of any kind to their account for games not played. However, teams may use the field for practice if there is a forfeit up until 10 minutes before the next scheduled game. If there is a forfeit of the last game on a field, teams may only practice until the last scheduled game is complete (on all other fields).
Example: if there is a forfeit of the only 10:00 p.m. game scheduled, then lights will be turned off at the time of forfeit.
9. **Field Rentals***: Practice fields can be reserved online. Please visit www.dentonparks.com for more information.
 - a. *Per city ordinance #2003-070 you are subject to a fine by the Denton Police Department up to \$500 if you occupy a field marked "Field Use By Reservation Only" without making a reservation!*
10. **Alcohol Use:** In accordance to the city's ordinance, Alcohol consumption and possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited in the park, this includes parking lot and dug-outs. League administrators and/or softball umpires can forfeit any game if any players are found to have alcoholic beverages within the park. Police may be called if alcohol is being consumed.
11. **Tobacco Use:** In accordance to the city's ordinance, use of tobacco products are prohibited inside the softball complex area (on the ballfields, in the dugouts, in the spectator area.) The designated smoking area will be the parking lot.
12. **Pets:** Pets are allowed inside the softball complex spectator area. They must be on a leash and cleaned up after. No Pets will be allowed on the ballfields or inside the dugouts. It is against city ordinance to leave an animal tied up.
13. **Trash Pick-Up:** Teams will be responsible for picking up their own trash in and around the dugouts after each game.
14. **Rosters/Eligibility**
15. **Roster Size:** Rosters will be limited to 20 players. All players must be at least 16 years of age at the time they participate. Participants under 18 years of age must obtain a signed parental waiver prior to playing in the City of Denton League.
16. **Free agents:** Team coordinators are encouraged to acquire new players from the free agent list, which can be found at www.teamsideline.com/denton
17. **Roster Submission:** Rosters must be filled out completely online.
 - i. Rosters must be completed online prior to the first game. Roster's not submitted online by team's first game will result in a forfeit loss for that game and any subsequent game for which a team roster is not completed.
 - ii. **Rosters are frozen after the last regular season league game. No player may be added after this time.**
 - iii. Should extenuating circumstances occur (i.e. injury, player relocation etc.) that directly hinders a team's ability to participate for a scheduled game, an **express written notice may**

be submitted to the Athletics' Division requesting roster transaction after the deadline. Each request will be taken on a case by case basis and will be left to the discretion of the Athletics Supervisor.

- iv. No additions will be allowed in the playoffs. Male team rosters shall include only male players and female rosters shall include only female players. Players may not change from one roster to another within the same division on the same night during the season.

All players written on your lineup card, including substitutes, should be on your roster by the start of the game.
18. **Player Eligibility:** Players may only play on one team per night. Exception: a player may play on a co-ed and a men's team on the same night. Players must be on all rosters of all teams that they are playing on.
 - i. If a player is caught playing on two teams on the same night, it will result in a forfeit for both teams he/she is playing on and the protested player caught playing illegally will be suspended from ALL games in ALL leagues for the remainder of that season.
 - ii. Players on roster must play in at least 1 game to be deemed eligible for playoffs.
 - iii. Every player must be able to provide a government photo id card which includes the player's name, date of birth, and picture. Any player unable to provide a government photo ID will be deemed ineligible to play until they can provide an ID.
 - iv. **Mandatory ID checks will be conducted by staff before the beginning of each playoff game.**
19. **Winning a division:** Once a team wins a division on a specific division night, that team must move up to the next highest division offered the same night or another night. If there is not another division higher the night you play, you may stay in the same division the next season.
 - i. After winning a division a team must move up for at least the following season.
 - ii. Any team that moves up by winning a division and is found to be playing in a lower division with more than (5) players who are the same, after moving up, will be disqualified from that game and forfeit ALL previous games played with the illegal roster.
 - iii. The offending team may not play again until the roster is made legal. A team that voluntarily moves up can move back down to the next lowest division offered.
 - iv. Teams that blatantly try to lose a game during playoffs to avoid moving up will automatically be moved up the following season. If both teams in a game try to lose, then both teams will move up. "Blatantly trying to lose a game" will be up to the umpires' discretion and is not eligible for protest or appeal. The call made at the fields will stand.
20. **Protests:** All protest must be in accordance with the respective governing body procedures, unless otherwise noted here. Umpires, scorekeepers, and PARD staff has the authority to verify eligibility.
 - **Player Eligibility Protests** - Player eligibility must be protested by the offended team manager by the end of the 3rd inning or by the end of an inning in which the ineligible player participates. (Player eligibility protests will not be accepted once the game ends.)
 - You must alert the home plate umpire you would like to verify eligibility of a particular player. At that time, the scorekeeper will verify the roster to determine eligibility of the player in question. If the player in question is not on the official team roster, the game will be declared a forfeit at that time, and a win will be awarded to the protesting team.
 - Players must present identification to verify eligibility if asked. If a player does not have identification with them, then they are unable to prove their eligibility and will be declared ineligible. Any protested player caught playing illegally will be suspended from ALL games in ALL leagues for the remainder of that season. If both teams protest eligibility, and both are upheld, the game will be declared a double forfeit, and both teams will receive a loss.

For all other protests - You must alert the umpire that you wish to play under protest and the scorekeeper will record it in the book.

- The protesting coach must submit a written protest along with a \$50.00 protest fee to the Denton Tennis & Pickleball Center within 24 hours of the game.
- Protests will not be reviewed until the fee is paid. Both team managers will be contacted after the protest review. The decision of the Athletics staff is final. Fee will be refunded if ruled in favor of protesting team.
- Protests will not be accepted on judgment calls, ejections or suspensions. Ejections are the decision of the umpires on the field at the time of the ejection. Ejections will not be overturned, nor are they subject to protest. Suspensions imposed from ejections are the final decision of the Athletics Office and are non-negotiable.

21. Uniforms & Equipment:

- Uniforms:** All team members must have a shirt/jersey with numbers permanently attached to the back of jersey.
 - a. Only whole numbers (0-99) of contrasting color or outlined in contrasting color. Number must be at least 6 inches high and must be worn on the back of all uniforms.
 - b. No players on the same team may wear identical numbers.
 - c. No taped-on numbers will be allowed. Numbers written in permanent marker will be allowed; however, the number must be legible and at least 6".
 - d. Attire should not contain profanity or images of violence.
 - e. By the first game of the season, all players must have jerseys that have legal numbers and jerseys that are of alike or similar/dominant color. Any discrepancies regarding uniforms need to be addressed with the umpires at the pregame plate meeting. The umpires will then decide if a jersey is legal or not. If a player is deemed to have a jersey without legal numbers or alike or similar/dominant color as their team, that player will not be permitted to play.
 - f. All players must wear athletic type shoes. No sandals, metal cleats, boots, open toe shoes allowed.
 - g. **Facemasks for pitchers are highly recommended throughout all leagues of play.**
 - h. Umpires may ban any equipment that they deem as unsafe or illegal. ALL exposed jewelry (including leather jewelry) will be deemed dangerous and must be removed or the player will not be allowed to play until it is removed. Smooth wedding bands and medical alert tags are acceptable.

22. Game Balls: All teams will furnish their own game ball. (Co-ed teams must provide both men's & women's game ball.) All game balls shall have an optic yellow cover with the following descriptions:

23. Yellow Cover with RED seams with USA/ASA Softball Stamp:

- i. Men's Ball: .52 COR/300 lb. compression 12" ball.
- ii. Women's Ball: .52 COR/300 lb. compression 11" ball.

- b. Balls do not have to be new but must be in good condition. The governing body seal must be legible and able to be viewed by the umpire. If the ball has begun to fade, it may be declared unusable at umpire discretion.

24. Bats: All bats must be stamped official softball. At the discretion of the umpire, bats may be removed from the game for failing to meet the certification of the league being used. Bats that are damaged, have a rattle, worn or suspected of being altered may be removed by the umpire.

- a. Any player who enters the box with unapproved, illegal, or altered bat is out and ejected.
- b. **Any gender is allowed to use them rather they are USSSA, USA/ASA, or NSA.**
 - i. A list of approved bats may be found here, [USA/ASA Softball Bat Lists. USSSA Softball Bat Lists.](#)

- c. All bats that are on the banned bat list from ASA, USSSA, or NSA will be illegal for league play. The bats on the illegal list must have the exact name and any numbers on the bats to be illegal. All approved bats must not be on any banned bat list.
- d. Players may not use “senior” bats to adhere to safety rules that a ball should not come off the bat more than 98mph.
- e. **Warm up bats and devices:** Players may use 2 approved regular bats to warm up, or they may use an official ‘warm-up’ bat which will be marked WB. By rule and for participant safety, no other warm up devices may be swung on the field, in the dugout, or behind the dugout. The only legal bat attachments for warm up are the Swing Sock and the PowR Wrap.
- f. **Pre-Game Bat Inspection:** Prior to the start of every game, teams must make all bats available to the umpires for a pre-game bat inspection. If a player is discovered to be using an illegal bat after the pre-game inspection, the player and bat will be out and ejected. Any time that players have a question regarding the legality of a bat, they must ask the home plate umpire for a ruling prior to taking a position in the batter’s box.

25. Playing Rules:

- i. The City of Denton Adult Softball Leagues are sanctioned by either USA Softball (formerly known as, Amateur Softball Association (ASA). Leagues will follow these by-laws with USA/ASA rules and regulations serving as the alternative for any rules or regulations not addressed in the playing rules.
- ii. **Time & Bat Count:**
 - a. **Time Limit:** Will be 55 minutes. Any game tied after time limit will be played to completion.
 - b. **Regulation:** All at bats will begin with a “1-1” count. No courtesy foul is given.
 - c. **Extra Innings:** All at bats will begin with a “3-2” count. No extra foul.
 - d. **Foul Balls:** No courtesy foul balls will be given when a foul ball is hit with 2 strikes as the result will be the batter being out.
- iii. **Line-Up cards:** Cards are due to the scorekeeper at least five minutes prior to the scheduled game time. It is the responsibility of the team manager (not the scorekeeper) to have blank line-up cards prior to each game. A copy of the lineup card is to be given to the Home Plate umpire at the plate conference. This is the official lineup and all changes must be made through the Home Plate umpire. For example, the manager must REPORT all substitutions. Players who are not present may not be listed on the line-up card. “Present” means in the dugout or on the field.
- iv. **Roster:** Each team needs 10 players consisting of a pitcher, a catcher, and all other players in the field may be stationed anywhere they choose on fair ground as each pitch is made. However, teams may start with 9 players. The tenth lineup spot will be an automatic out until a player arrives.
 - a. In Co-ed play, a team may have 5 males/4 females or 4 males/5 females to start. If a team drops below 9 players (when starting with 10), below 10 players (when starting with 11) or below 11 players (when starting with 12) the game will be declared a forfeit.
 - b. Any team that is not ready at game time (but has a minimum of 8 players ready) automatically loses their first at-bat. If the clock reaches 49 minutes after that and the team still does not have enough players, then the game will be declared a forfeit. Players must be in the dugout or on the field when the 49 minute mark is reached.
 - c. Co-ed only: Batting order must alternate gender. Defense must have equal number of each gender at pitcher/catcher, infield and outfield.
 - d. Bucket Player (5th infield player) allowed
- v. **Defensive Positioning:** In men’s play, a team may use five infielders or five outfielders. In Co-ed, outfielders may not play close to the infield nor may infielders back up into the outfield.
- vi. **Run Rule:** Is as follows
 - a. 15 runs after 2 ½ or 3 innings

- b. 12 runs after 3 ½ or 4 innings
- c. 10 runs after 4 ½ or 5 innings
- vii. **Home Run Rule:** Limits are as follows:
 - a. Men's C – 5
 - b. Men's D – 4
 - c. Men's E – 1
 - d. Co-Ed Rec/D – 2
 - e. Co-Ed Rec E – 1
 - f. Coed For Fun – 0
 - g. In leagues with a home run limit greater than zero (0): For any in excess, the ball is dead, the batter is out, and no runners can advance. In leagues with a home run limit of zero (0): Any home run will result in the batter being called out and no runners can advance. If two leagues are combined, then the home run limit of the lower league will be used.
- viii. **Stealing:** Stealing will be allowed in Men's divisions only. This may only occur once the ball has reached the plate. Stealing will not be allowed in any of the Co-Ed divisions.
- ix. **Pitching:** A quick (speed) pitch is allowed, and pitcher does not have to present the ball. Pitcher can maneuver, throw behind back or do as they wish. However, batter must be inside box.
- x. **Co-ed base on balls rule:** If a male batter walks, he is awarded first base AND second base. If there are two outs, the next batter, a female, can choose to walk or bat.
- xi. Home team will be the team listed as "home" on the schedule. During playoffs the higher seed is home team. There will be no coin flip.
- xii. Any team discovered using the batter's box prior to 7pm will be assessed a one out penalty at the start of their game.
- xiii. **Playoffs:**
 - a. All leagues except for the "For fun" league will be placed into an end of season tournament following the regular season based on standings in the league.

xiv. Halo Rule:

- The Halo Rule will be enforced with all divisions - If a batter hits a ball up the middle directly at the pitcher and/or path in flight passed the rubber—if in the judgment of the umpire to be dangerous (high risk of injury), the play will be ruled dead—runners will go back to the original base they started at time of pitch and the batter is out. - Chalked lines will be marked down 1 foot on each side of the pitching rubber to assist in discretion. - If the ball hits the ground before the rubber and then hits the pitcher the Halo Rule will not be enforced as this is considered a ground ball. - If the ball is above the pitcher's head when it travels through the Halo Zone the Halo Rule will not be enforced.
 - While not required, we **strongly encourage pitchers to wear protective face gear** to reduce the risk of injury from batted balls. This recommendation aligns with our commitment to player safety.

26. A pitcher may request a courtesy runner after safely reaching base.

- This option is available **at the pitcher's discretion** and should be communicated promptly to the umpire.

27. Conduct & Disciplinary Action

28. Responsibility for a team's conduct lies with the team manager.

29. Unsportsmanlike conduct, such as profanity, fighting, language of a sexual or racial nature, or otherwise abusive or dangerous behavior will NOT BE TOLERATED at any time including before, during, or after a game, on or off the field, or during the season or the off-season. Any coach, manager, player, or fan who exhibits unsportsmanlike behavior will be ejected from the game. There will be no warnings given. A review of any such incident(s) will be conducted by the Athletics Manager, whom will have the final say in these matters.

30. Verbal Abuse: Any individual who verbally abuses a player, spectator, umpire, or staff member, at any time will be suspended from their next eligible game.

31. **Physical Abuse:** Any individual who physically abuses a player, spectator, umpire, scorekeeper, or staff member will result in expulsion of that player(s) from all City of Denton Leagues for at least a one-year period and will be liable to criminal charges/legal action.
32. **First Ejection Offense:** Any situation that an umpire deems unsportsmanlike (includes consumption of alcohol) may be cause for ejection. **At least 1-week suspension.**
 - i. If a player(s) is ejected from the game for any reason, the ejected player(s) team must have a substitute available to replace the ejected player(s) or that team will forfeit the game if they fall below the required number of players.
 - ii. Ejections are the decision of the umpires on the field at the time of the ejection. Ejections will not be overturned, nor are they subject to protest. Suspensions imposed from ejections are the final decision of the Athletics Office and are non-negotiable.
33. **Second Ejection Offense:** Any situation that an umpire deems unsportsmanlike (includes consumption of alcohol) may be cause for ejection. **Will result in suspension from league**
 - iii. Upon the second ejection for any one person in a season will result in suspension from all games in all leagues (sports) for the remainder of the season. Upon the third ejection for any one person in a season will result in a suspension from all games in all leagues (sports) for the remainder of that season and for the next season.
34. **Ejected Individuals:**
 - iv. Any ejected individual must leave the facility property (includes field/spectator are) immediately, within two (2 minutes). Failure to leave or returning to the park will result in a forfeit of any game(s) his/her team is playing, has played, or will play that night. North Lakes Park includes the area from Hinkle to Bonnie Brae and Windsor to the soccer fields. It is the Team Manager or person who does the plate meeting to be aware if a player has been ejected and notify the ejected player not to return.
 - v. Any ejected individual will automatically be suspended from all City of Denton sponsored softball for one-week worth of games (7 days). (For example, if ejected on Monday, the player may not return until the following Wednesday.)
 1. However, in the event of rain the Monday following the ejection, the player will then be required to sit out the team's next game that is actually played (non-rain out) for the Monday league.
 - vi. Suspended persons are not allowed at North Lakes Park during the suspension period. Failure to comply with this policy results in a forfeit of any game(s) scheduled that night for the team(s) they are playing with at that time, AND the person shall be suspended from all city-sponsored softball for the remainder of that season.
 - vii. If a player is suspended at the end of one season, that suspension will carry over into the following season.
35. The Athletic Supervisor will review any actions determined to be detrimental to the league. The City of Denton reserves the right to increase or decrease the severity of penalties based on previous history, unusual or special circumstances, or to protect the integrity of the league.

Denton Parks and Recreation

PLAYER'S CODE OF CONDUCT

All Participants are required to abide by the Player's Code of Conduct; this is located on the reverse of the roster form. By signing the team roster, each player is acknowledging that he/she has read the Player's Code of Conduct and that he/she will abide by these rules. **It is the manager's responsibility to ensure all players have signed the roster or the team is subject to dismissal from the league.** The Athletics Office has the power and full discretion of imposing penalties on all violations of Player's Code of Conduct. For any violation not explicitly stated in the code, the penalty will be at the discretion of the Athletics Office.

1. **No Player May:** Refuse to abide by an official's decision, threaten an official, or at any time lay a hand upon, push, shove, or strike an official. (The following applies to all sections): "Player" means any participant, i.e., player, team member, coach, manager, scorekeeper, or fan. "Official" means any umpire/scorekeeper or Denton Parks and Rec. staff.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Sec. 3 for full definition). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

2. **No Player May:** Demonstrate objection to an official's decision by throwing any object, and no object shall be thrown in any manner, for any reason, that an official judges to be dangerous.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

3. **No Player May:** Be guilty of using unnecessarily rough tactics in the play of the game against the body and person of any opposing player.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

4. **No Player May:** Be guilty of an abusive verbal attack upon any player, official, or spectator. Any use of profanity, obscene or vulgar language in any manner, at any time, will not be tolerated.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

5. **No Player May:** Be responsible for the presence of intoxicating substances in the team area, or use any intoxicating substances within North Lakes Park, or appear to be in an intoxicated condition. When non-participants are known to have intoxicating substances, players shall remain on the field or in their team area.

Penalty: Officials will eject player or players from the game and report the incident to the Athletics Office. There is an automatic one-week (7 days) suspension for any ejected player (See Rules of Conduct, Section 3). For any flagrant act, the suspension will remain in effect until final disposition by the Athletics Office.

6. **No Player May:** Smoke on the field of play or in the dugout. Smoking is only allowed in the marked designated areas, which are 200 feet from the field of play.

Penalty: Officials are required to warn players guilty of infractions of this rule, and failure of such players to comply will result in their immediate ejection from the game.

7. **No Player May:** Permit anyone to remain in the team area during the game that is not a roster member of the team. Managers, scorekeepers, batboys and batgirls are allowed in the area.

Penalty: Officials will notify a team's manager if this rule is not complied with. Thereafter, failure to cooperate with officials in enforcing this rule shall result in forfeiture of the game.

Game Officials (Umpires/Scorekeepers) have general authority to handle unsportsmanlike conduct in accordance with governing body rules.

The Game Official in Charge may either suspend or declare forfeit any game where in his or her judgment there has been a violation of the code, making it unsafe to continue the contest.

Denton Parks and Recreation

Concussion Policy

PURPOSE

The following policy and procedures are being implemented by the Denton Parks and Recreation Department, with the intent to reduce the potentially serious health risks associated with sports related concussions and head injuries.

POLICY

It is policy of the Denton Parks and Recreation Department to educate coaches, referees, staff, parents, and participants of the signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with sports induced concussions. Participants suspected of a concussion or head injury, are required to be removed from the activity, must seek medical attention, and then follow the proper procedure for return to play. "When in doubt, sit them out!"

DEFINITION

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury that is caused by a blow to the head or body that jars or shakes the brain inside the skull. It is important to note that an athlete does not have to lose consciousness to have suffered a concussion. Symptoms include but are not limited to the following below.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY OTHERS

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

SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY ATHLETE

- Headache
- 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"

ROLE OF COACHES AND STAFF

Coaches and staff will NOT be expected, nor will they be trained to "diagnose" a concussion. Diagnosis is the job of a qualified health care provider. Coaches and staff are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. If coaches or staff observes questionable signs, symptoms, or behavior, he/she must remove the player from the sporting event for further evaluation and notify the player's parent/guardian and fill out the appropriate accident form. Coaches and staff are not permitted to allow a player to resume activity until the Denton Parks and Recreation receives a written statement from a qualified health care provider indicating that the player is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event.

ROLE OF OFFICIALS

Officials will NOT be expected to "diagnose" a concussion. Officials are being asked to use their best judgment in observing the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. Officials will not be asked to give what could be perceived as a medical opinion. If an official observes questionable, signs, symptoms, or behavior, the official should notify the appropriate staff and the player should be removed from the sporting event. Officials are not responsible for the sideline evaluation or management of the player after he/she is removed from play.

ROLE OF PARENTS/GUARDIANS

Like coaches, staff and officials, parents/guardians will NOT be expected to "diagnose" a concussion. However, parents/guardians are being asked to become familiar with the signs, symptoms, and behaviors associated with concussions. Parents/guardians will be expected to comply with this Policy and support the determination made by staff to remove a player from a sporting event.

It is the parent/guardian's obligation to have the player evaluated by a qualified health care provider and to obtain from that provider a written statement that clears the player to resume participation in the sporting event.

MANDATED COURSE OF ACTION

1. Remove player from the sporting event.
2. Notify parent/guardian.
3. Any player suspected of having a concussion should be evaluated by a qualified health care provider as soon as practicable.
4. Before a player will be allowed to resume participation in a sporting event, the parent/guardian of the player must obtain a written statement from a qualified health provider and return to the Denton Parks and Recreation Department indicating that the player is cleared to resume participation in the sporting event.

The signs, symptoms and behaviors associated with a concussion are not always apparent immediately after a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body and may develop over a few hours or longer. An athlete should be closely watched following a suspected concussion and should never be left alone.

Athletes should never try to "tough out" a concussion. Teammates, parents/guardians and coaches should never encourage an athlete to "play through" the symptoms of a concussion. In addition, there should never be an attribution of bravery or courage to athletes who play despite having concussion signs and/or symptoms. The risks of such behavior must be emphasized to all members of the team, as well as coaches and parents.

If an athlete returns to activity before being fully healed from an initial concussion, the athlete is at greater risk for a repeat concussion. A repeat concussion that occurs before the brain has a chance to recover from the first can slow recovery or increase the chance for long-term problems. In rare cases, a repeat concussion can result in severe swelling and bleeding in the brain that can be fatal.

Return to Play

After suffering a concussion, no athlete should return to play or practice on that same day. An athlete should never be allowed to resume play following a concussion until symptom free and given the approval to resume physical activity by an appropriate health-care professional. Documentation must be provided to the Denton Parks and Recreation athletic supervisor.

Once an athlete no longer has signs or symptoms of a concussion and is cleared to return to activity by an appropriate health-care professional, he/she should proceed in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exercise. In most cases, the athlete should progress no more than one step each day, and at times each step may take more than one day.

If symptoms of a concussion recur, or if concussion signs and/or behaviors are observed at any time during the return-to-activity program, the athlete must discontinue all activity immediately. Depending on previous instructions, the athlete may need to be re-evaluated by the health-care provider.