



CITY OF RICHLAND CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT INFORMATION SHEET

A 2009 act requiring the adoption of policies for the management of concussion and head injury in youth sports; amending the Revised Code of Washington 4.24.660 and adding section RCW 28A.600.190 “Zackery Lystedt Law” states, in part, the following:

Each school district's board of directors shall work in concert with the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA) to develop the guidelines and other pertinent information and forms to inform and educate coaches, youth athletes, and their parent(s)/legal guardian(s) of the nature and risk of concussion and head injury including continuing to play after concussion or head injury. On a yearly basis, a concussion and head injury information sheet shall be signed and returned by the youth athlete and the athlete's parent/legal guardian prior to the youth athlete's initiating practice or competition.

Although the law generally directs these instructions to school districts and the Washington Interscholastic Activities Association (WIAA), it is best practice that private, nonprofit youth sports associations wanting to use publicly owned playfields also comply with the law. The City of Richland requires all youth sports activities using City of Richland property or facilities to comply with this law.

After reading this information on youth head injuries and the awareness information provided on a separate “Sudden Cardiac Arrest Information Sheet,” please sign the “Concussion and Sudden Cardiac Arrest Statement.” The signed Statement must be returned to the youth sports association or the City of Richland and is good only for the current sports season.

Concussion Management Information

A concussion is a brain injury, and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.** In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- “Pressure in head”
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness

- Change in sleep patterns
- Amnesia
- “Don’t feel right”
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability
- More emotional
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment

Signs observed by teammates, parents/legal guardians and coaches include:

- Appears dazed
- Vacant facial expression
- Confused about assignment
- Forgets plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily or displays lack of coordination
- Answers questions slowly
- Slurred speech
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall events prior to hit
- Can’t recall events after hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Loses consciousness

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often underreport symptoms of injuries, and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents/legal guardians, and athletes is the key for youth athletes’ safety.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion:

Any athlete suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The “Zackery Lystedt Law” in Washington requires the consistent and uniform implementation of long and well-established return-to-play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years: “A youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time.” “[He or she] may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health-care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and has received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider.” You should also inform your child’s coach if you

think that your child may have a concussion. It is better to miss one game than miss the whole season, so when in doubt, the athlete should sit out.

RETURN TO PARTICIPATION PROTOCOL

If the youth athlete has been diagnosed with a concussion, he/she MUST follow a progressive return to participation protocol (under the supervision of an approved health care provider) before full participation is authorized.

The return to play protocol may not begin until the athlete is no longer showing signs or symptoms of concussion. Once symptom free, the athlete may begin a progressive return to play. This progression begins with light aerobic exercise only to increase the heart rate (5-10 minutes of light jog or exercise bike) and progresses each day as long as the athlete remains symptom free. If at any time symptoms return, the athlete is removed from participation.

Additional information regarding concussion management is available from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at: <http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>.