

**DON'T
BE A**

HEADCASE

**STOP! CHECK
FOR CONCUSSION**

HEADACHE EMOTIONAL APPERANCE DROWSINESS CONFUSION AGITATED SEIZURE EARS AND EYES

MATCH OFFICIALS GENERAL INFORMATION

CONCUSSION AND OFFICIATING

Match Officials have an important role in the prevention and management of concussion. Through the correct and consistent application of the Laws of the game match officials are able to influence players and their coach's behaviour towards concussion. If a match official has concerns that a player may have suffered a concussion he/she may stop play and call the First Aider / Coach onto the field of play to express his concerns and ask them to examine the player.

All match officials should be able to recognise suspected concussion and are in the best position to remove the player from play –

RECOGNISE & REMOVE

PREVENTION

Ideally we all want to prevent concussions occurring and although it may not be possible to stop them happening altogether, there are some measures that can be taken during rugby league training and games that have the potential to reduce the number of concussions that we see:

1. Ensure the playing or training area is safe, and the risk of serious head injury occurring is reduced:
 - Check ground conditions - do not play or train if the ground is frozen solid or rock hard due to drought
 - Ensure all posts and barriers on or close to the pitch are protected with appropriate padding
2. Ensure correct tackle technique is performed consistently by all players.
3. Explain the dangers of high, tip and spear tackles, and penalise them immediately if they occur. Similarly with tackling players in the air, jumping to catch the ball from kicks. Falling from height increases the risk of concussion and neck injuries. In young players in particular, a zero tolerance approach should be taken to dangerous play.

RECOGNISE

It is important to realise that a player does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Players may experience a number of problems after a blow to the head, or you may notice certain things that arouse your suspicion.

Thinking problems that the player may experience:

- Does not know time, date, place, period of game, opposing team, or the score in the game
- General confusion
- Cannot remember things that happened before and/or after the injury
- Seems slow to answer questions or follow directions
- Seems easily distracted
- Not playing as well as expected
- A blank stare/glassy eyed, "the lights are on but nobody is at home"

Things that the player may complain of or you see:

- Knocked out
- Headache
- Dizziness
- Feel dazed, “dinged” or stunned;
- Loss of vision, seeing double or blurred, seeing stars or flashing lights
- Ringing in the ears
- Sleepiness
- Stomach ache, stomach pain, nausea, vomiting
- Poor coordination or balance, staggering around or unsteady on feet
- Slurred speech
- Poor concentration
- Strange or inappropriate emotions (i.e. laughing, crying, getting angry easily)
- Feeling generally unwell

If you suspect concussion YOU must REMOVE them from play right away.

Continuing to play increases their risk of more severe, longer lasting concussion symptoms, as well as increases their risk of other injury.

CAN IT BE ANYTHING MORE SERIOUS?

Anyone who gets a head injury should be seen by a doctor as soon as possible to have a diagnosis made. The doctor will usually give instructions to them to go back to them or go to hospital **IMMEDIATELY** if they have worsening of symptoms such as:

- Drowsiness when normally awake or cannot be awoken
- A headache that is getting worse
- Weakness, numbness or decreases in coordination and balance
- Repeated vomiting or prolonged nausea
- Slurred speech, difficulty speaking or understanding
- Increasing confusion, restlessness or agitation
- Loss of consciousness
- Convulsions
- Clear fluid coming out of ears or nose
- Deafness in one or both ears Problems with eyesight

If you suspect a serious injury you should ask for the team’s first aider to attend immediately and if none is available, ask for an ambulance to be called immediately.

These Concussion resources have been developed based on the Zurich Guidelines published in the Consensus Statement on Concussion in



Sporte.

The information contained in this resource is intended for educational purposes only and is not meant to be a substitute for appropriate medical advice or care. If you believe that you or someone under your care has sustained a concussion we strongly recommend that you contact a qualified health care professional for appropriate diagnosis and treatment. The authors have made responsible efforts to include

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