

Safe kids 😊 Healthy kids 😊 Happy kids

Know the Facts about Concussions

Kids who are involved in sports, dance and cheerleading risk injury. Concussions are a common problem. Concussions caused over 163,000 emergency room visits last year. Almost 50% of these visits involved kids ages 12-15.

Football has the highest concussion rate. Wrestling and cheerleading hold second and third place. *Concussions are a serious health problem* – and can even be fatal.

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury. A bump or jolt to the head or a blow to the head or body can cause a concussion. This hit bounces the brain back and forth within the skull or twists it. This motion causes the brain to stretch and tear. The result can be bleeding and damaged brain cells. The brain may even sustain chemical changes.

Concussions have a range from mild to severe. **All are serious.** These injuries can have delayed symptoms. At first, the child might report minor injury – feeling a little dazed. Many kids may report no symptoms for fear of being sidelined.

Kids with a concussion need medical attention. They

also must have **time to heal.** Recovery time varies – days, weeks, even months.

Doctors fear repeat concussions. Kids whose brains have not healed risk further injury. Repeat concussions need a long recovery times. They may even cause permanent brain damage.

Help keep your child safe during sport activities.

- Fit your child with the proper safety and protective gear.

If your teen has any symptoms listed below, take him to a health care professional.

Symptoms include:

- uneven dilated pupils,
- headache,
- nausea or throwing up,
- blurred vision,
- poor coordination or balance,
- slurred speech,
- irritability,
- anxiety,
- depressed mood, or
- sleep disturbance.

Sometimes severe symptoms can take hours or days to show up.

- Make sure he follows all safety rules for the sport. *Helmets do not prevent concussions. Kids must avoid hits to the head.*
- Discuss and expect your child to display good sportsmanship.
- Know the league or school policy on concussions. Cheerleading and dance are not considered sports. Ask about policies for these activities.
- Know the signs and symptoms of a concussion.
- Inform your child's coach of past concussions and injuries.
- Discuss with your child the dangers of playing with a concussion.
- Tell the coach your child needs a doctor's release before he can play his sport again.

📖 For more tips and personal stories, log onto www.cdc.gov/Concussion

Brought to you by Parent Help Line and St. John's Children's Hospital



Call the Parent Help Line. Help is just a phone call away.
1-217-544-5808 or 1-888-727-5889, 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., 7 days a week
www.parenthelpline.org

