

CONCUSSION SAFETY

According to the Sports Concussion Institute of California, about 10% of high school athletes' injuries are accounted for by concussions. Failure to properly manage a concussion can lead to long-term cumulative consequences. To prevent these consequences, consider the following concussion safety items prior to your child participating in school sports:

1. What is the school's policy for concussions? Are they willing to work with you and your child during the recovery period? Do they require that the child be cleared by a physician before returning to school, as well as to continue playing the sport?
2. Does the school have a certified trainer? Is a baseline test offered to the athlete prior to participating in a sport? In the event of a concussion, baseline testing is important so that the trainer or physician is able to evaluate the impact of the injury and the degree of the concussion. Many schools participate in a baseline test called the IMPACT Test offered by the University of Pittsburgh Medical Center (UPMC).
3. Is the coach educated about the risks of concussions, and what is the policy for returning to active play? Are they willing to follow the physician's guidelines for recovery?

According to MedicineNet.com, "recent research has found that young athletes are more likely than adults to sustain concussions and to take longer to recover. Children with such head injuries also run a greater risk of long term neurologic damage if they sustain a second concussion while recovering from their first." Realizing the risk of your child sustaining this damage in the event of a concussion is important, and parents should provide accurate, honest information about their child's symptoms – regardless of pressure for the child to return to their sport.

Some symptoms of a concussion are headache, nausea, dizziness or balance problems, sensitivity to light or noise, confusion and loss of consciousness. While some symptoms are immediate, others are more delayed and may show up later. Remember that you should not feel pressured to have your child return to their sport without being cleared by a physician – returning too early will affect their schoolwork and future. The brain needs time to heal!

Questions? Call us at Personal Health Partners.

800-327-7272

