

Concussion/Mild Brain Injury

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a “mild” injury to the brain that temporarily alters the way your brain functions. Although concussions are usually caused by a blow to the head, they can also occur when the head and upper body are shaken. Effects are usually temporary but can include headaches and problems with concentration, memory, balance, and coordination. These injuries can cause a loss of consciousness, but most concussions do not.

You do not have to be “knocked out” to have a concussion.

Always consult a physician if you suspect you or someone you know might have a concussion.

Are all concussions the same?

Not all concussions are the same and the presence of symptoms, their severity and the speed of recovery can be different. Other

factors such as history of concussions may mean a longer recovery time. Research shows that people who have received an initial concussion are up to four times more likely to have another concussion than someone who has never had one.

What are the Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion?

If any one of the below symptoms is present, a concussion should be suspected. Symptoms can last days, weeks, or in some cases longer.

Early signs

- General confusion
- Nausea and vomiting
- Dizziness and/or “seeing stars”
- Strange behaviour and unusual emotions
- Slurred speech
- Headache
- Slow to respond to questions
- Lack of coordination and balance
- Loss of consciousness

Late signs of a concussion may include:

- Persistent headache
- Poor attention
- Depressed mood
- Irritability
- Memory problems
- Blurred vision or a loss of field of vision
- Tiredness
- Anxiety
- Restlessness
- Ringing in ears
- Change in sleeping pattern
- Sensitivity to sound and/or light

Recognizing a Concussion in Sport

Players who have suffered a concussion may minimize or deny symptoms in order to stay in the game. Having knowledge of the player's personality and an understanding of the signs and symptoms of concussion can prevent further injury, long-term damage or catastrophic outcome. Look for:

- Vacant stare
- Confused look
- Behaviour not typical for that person, distracted, emotional
- Confusion or place, time, and date
- No memory of events for a period of time after an injury

When in doubt,
sit them out

If symptoms of concussion are detected, the person should not be allowed to return to the game. The person should be removed from play, closely watched and assessed by a doctor. Close and repeated monitoring is very important; some symptoms may take a few minutes to appear.

Tips for recovery

- Complete rest; no strenuous or contact activity while symptoms are still present.
- Return to physical activity slowly once symptoms have passed.
- Avoid activities that could lead to a second concussion until your doctor says that you are well enough and all symptoms have passed.
- Ask your doctor when you should begin driving again, as your reaction time may be slower for a while.
- Take only those drugs and natural supplements that your doctor has approved.
- Do not drink alcohol until you are well enough to do so. Alcohol and other drugs may slow your recovery and put you at risk for further injury and seizures.
- Problems usually go away with time and without treatment. However, if problems continue, help is available, such as education materials, education sessions, and links with community services.

NOTE: This material is for information only and should not replace information from a doctor or health care professional.

What to do if you have a Concussion?

If you think you or someone you know might have a concussion, always consult a doctor or contact HealthLine at 811



For more information, you can also reach out to the Acquired Brain Injury Partnership Education and Prevention Coordinators.

North Education & Prevention Coordinator

C/O North Outreach Team
1521-6th Avenue West
Prince Albert, SK S6V 5K1
Phone: 306-765-6470

Central Education & Prevention Coordinator

C/O Central Outreach Team
701 Queen Street
Saskatoon SK S7K 0M7
Phone: 306-655-8433

South Education & Prevention Coordinator

C/O South Outreach Team
2180-23rd Avenue
Regina SK S4S 0A5
Phone: 306-766-5144

General inquires can be sent to:

SHApredventionABI@saskhealthauthority.ca

The E&P Coordinators can also be found on social media:



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