

Gettysburg School District Suspected Concussion Procedure

A concussion is any alteration of mental status due to a sudden, and violent, rocking of the brain inside of the skull caused by a traumatic blow to the head or upper body. Concussion symptoms, which can last various lengths of time, may include: headache, nausea, vomiting, balance problems, dizziness, fatigue, drowsiness, sensitivity to light, sensitivity to noise, irritability, sadness, feeling foggy or groggy, visual problems, nervousness, feeling more emotional, difficulty concentrating, trouble sleeping, and difficulty remembering.

Most athletes who experience an initial concussion can recover completely as long as they are not returned to exertion or contact too soon. An athlete who returns to play too soon before the brain has had time to heal is at greater risk for further, more serious injury.

In accordance with improved understanding of concussions the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) has instituted the following rule regarding concussions. Any player who exhibits signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be immediately removed from the game and shall not return to play until cleared by an appropriate health care professional.

Understanding the danger of concussion injuries to our student athletes the Gettysburg coaching staff will adhere to the following action plan:

1. The coach will remove the participant from play. Athletes may be sent off the field of play by an official who **suspects** a head injury. (Officials are not making a determination of a concussion but can send a player out of a contest for evaluation. It is important to note that the responsibility of the officials is limited to activities that occur on the field, court or mat.) Once the participant has been removed from a contest due to a suspected concussion, the coach or appropriate health-care professional(s) assumes full responsibility for that athlete's further evaluation and safety.
2. The coach, an assistant coach, or administrator will inform the student athletes' parents or guardians about the possible concussion.
3. The coach will keep the student athlete out of play the day of the suspected concussion injury and will not allow them to return to play. If in doubt, the coach will sit them out.
4. The Return to Competition form must be completed before the student athlete will be allowed to return to participate after a concussion.