

CONCUSSION IN KIDS

PHYSIOS

OF MT ELIZA

What is a Concussion?

This is a form of traumatic brain injury. It is a short-term disturbance of normal brain function due to an external force impacting the head or body. A concussion does not always result in a loss of consciousness. Head impacts can be associated with severe and potentially fatal brain injuries.

In the early stages of injury, it can be difficult to ascertain if you are dealing with a mild or severe underlying injury.

What are the symptoms?

These can be varied and often occur together. They can be present at the time of injury or have a delayed onset:

- Headache
- Nausea
- Sleep disturbance
- Fatigue
- Anxiety and depression
- Balance disturbance
- Difficulty concentrating
- Exercise intolerance

What is the recovery?

You are strongly encouraged to seek an assessment by a medical doctor after a concussion. Urgent medical attention is required in the setting of loss of consciousness, worsening headache, nausea and or vomiting, or persisting symptoms occur.

A rest period will be advised before a gradual return to sport can be achieved. No child should be allowed back to competition within 12 days and should miss the following week's match.

Most people recover fully within 10-14 days. This can vary and will be different for each person and each episode of concussion.

Around 20% of people will experience ongoing concussion symptoms. This is referred to as Persisting Post-Concussion Symptoms. This will need medical management.

Best practice post-concussion

- Do not return to the playing field if a concussion is suspected. Safety is always best
- Seek medical attention if a concussion is suspected as soon as possible. Assessment by a medical doctor is strongly advised
- Rest your brain from physical and mental activity such as reading, concentrating, playing computer games and watching TV for 24-48 hours or until the complete resolution of concussion symptoms for 24hrs. Your child will likely require 2-3 days off school
- Sleep. Best to have someone check on you every 2-4 hrs and someone with you for 24hrs afterwards
- Only take medication if recommended by a medical professional
- Start a graded loaded program once symptoms have resolved. Ideally, this should be monitored by a medical doctor or physiotherapist
- Clearance by a medical doctor before resuming competitive contact sport or full contact training
- The earliest you should return is 12 days after the day at which the concussion was sustained

What will your Physiotherapist do?

A Physiotherapist trained in concussion management can provide a diagnosis and medical referral. They can treat post-concussion symptoms and guide the gradual return to sport safely.

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