



**RECOGNIZE TO  
RECOVER.**

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# CONCUSSION: LET'S TAKE BRAIN INJURIES OUT OF PLAY

## FACTS

- Concussion is a brain injury that alters the way your brain functions.
- Concussion can occur from a blow to the head/body: contact with the ground, ball, or another player.
- Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness.
- Severity of injury depends on many factors and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal.
- All concussions are not created equally. Each player is different, each injury is different, and your team medical staff should evaluate all injuries.

## SYMPTOMS

Different symptoms can occur and may not show up for several days.

### Common symptoms include:

- Headache
- Loss of consciousness
- Confusion
- Double/fuzzy vision
- Dizziness
- Balance problems
- Nausea
- Slow reaction time
- Amnesia/difficulty remembering
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Feeling sluggish, foggy or groggy
- Feeling more emotional than usual
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbances

## WHY I SHOULD REPORT MY SYMPTOMS?

- Unlike other injuries, there may be consequences to “playing through” a concussion.
- Practicing or playing while still experiencing symptoms may prolong the time it takes to recover and return to playing soccer.
- Repetitive brain injury, when not managed promptly and properly, may cause permanent damage to your brain.
- Your brain is one of the most vital organs in your body.

**NOTE:** Symptoms may worsen with physical or mental exertion (e.g. lifting, computer use, reading, driving).

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I'VE HAD A CONCUSSION?

### 1 | REPORT IT

Never ignore symptoms even if they appear mild. Look out for your teammates. Tell your Athletic Trainer or Team Physician if you think you or a teammate may have a concussion.

### 2 | GET CHECKED OUT

Your team medical staff has your health and well being as its priority. They will manage your concussion according to U.S. Soccer Concussion Evaluation and Management Guidelines, which include being asymptomatic, both at rest and after exertion, and having a normal neurological examination, normal neuropsychological testing, and clearance to play by the Team Physician. Under the Guidelines, any U.S. Soccer player who is diagnosed with a concussion must undergo neuropsychological testing in consultation with a clinical neuropsychologist. If you have a concussion, make sure that you receive this evaluation.

### 3 | TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “traumatic brain injury can cause a wide range of short or long-term changes affecting thinking, sensation, language, or emotions.” These changes may lead to issues with your brain and moods that make simple, everyday tasks challenging if not impossible. Concussions and conditions resulting from repeated brain injury can change your life and your family’s life forever