

Created: 6/18/2019

Revised: 6/18/2019

## **Staunton City Schools**

### **Concussion Facts for Student-Athletes, Parents, Coaches and Faculty**

#### ***Definition:***

SCS and its employees will define a concussion, as adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as a complex pathophysiologic process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces secondary to direct or indirect forces to the head. Concussions are caused by a blow or jolt to the head that disrupts the function of the brain and may result in one or more physical, cognitive, emotional and/or sleep-related symptoms and may or may not involve a loss of consciousness (LOC). Duration of symptoms is highly variable and may last from several minutes to days, weeks, months, or even longer in some cases. A blow may not necessarily be directly to the head for disruptive forces to affect the brain. A whiplash motion in which a blow occurs to the body and the head is snapped in another direction or a sudden halt of forces causing the brain to sustain a high impact force to the inside of the skull are also mechanisms for sustaining such an injury. Short-term effects may include memory loss, altered personality or behavior, altered sleep patterns, deteriorated cognitive functions, or any of the signs and symptoms listed throughout this policy. Long-term effects may include permanent brain damage or even death. Concussions can have a more serious effect on a young developing brain therefore need to be address correctly.

#### ***Emergency Medical Services:***

Immediate referral procedures should be initiated for emergency management with sudden onset of any of the following (Red Flags):

- Severe or worsening headache
- Looks very drowsy/can't be awakened
- Unable to recognize people or places
- Neck Pain
- Seizures
- Vomiting
- Blood / clear fluid leakage from ears / nose
- Inability to tack 6 cardinal visions of gaze
  - Increasing confusion / irritability
  - Unusual behavioral changes
  - Focal neurologic signs
  - Slurred or incoherent speech
  - Weakness / numbness in arms / legs
  - Loss of consciousness / unresponsiveness
  - PEARL abnormalities

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***Recognition of Symptoms:***

1. Headache
2. Pressure in head
3. Neck Pain
4. Dizziness
5. Nausea
6. Altered vision
7. Hearing problems/ringing in ears
8. "Don't feel right"
9. Problems with Balance
10. Confusion
11. Feeling slowed down
12. Feeling in a fog
13. Abnormally drowsy or tired
14. Fatigue or low energy
15. More emotional than usual
16. Irritability
17. Difficulty concentrating
18. Difficulty remembering
19. Sadness
20. Nervous or anxious
21. Trouble falling asleep
22. Sleeping more than normal
23. Sensitivity to light
24. Sensitivity to noise

***Participation, Evaluation and Referral Protocol:***

In summary of the Virginia High School League's "Order of Authority (5-01)" in Appendix 2: If at least one of any of the following: parent, coach, physician or athletic trainer, express a need or desire for the student-athlete to be excluded from participation, that recommendation must be followed until all four individuals unanimously agree that it is safe for that student-athlete to return to participation.

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## Concussion Home Care Instructions

**Athlete:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Sport:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Date of Injury:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date of Evaluation:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Evaluator:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Definition:** a concussion is an injury to the brain where there are disturbances in the electrical activity of the brain. This can be caused by a direct trauma or indirect.

**Mechanism of Injury:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**Signs & Symptoms:** If any of the below symptoms get worse or new ones arise take your athlete to be seen by a doctor. Symptoms should be monitored very closely by a responsible adult especially during the first 24-48 hours after injury. (R) denotes a red flag symptom in which Emergency Medical Services should be activated.

↑Headache	↑Sensitivity to Noise	↑Loss of Consciousness (R)
↑“Pressure in head”	↑Feeling “slowed down”	↑Nervousness/Anxious
↑Neck Pain	↑Feel like “in a fog”	↑Inappropriate emotions (R)
↑Nausea	↑“Don’t feel right”	↑Vacant Stare/Glassy Eyed
↑Vomiting (R)	↑Difficulty Concentrating	↑Coordination Problems
↑Dizziness	↑Difficulty Remembering	↑Nystagmus
↑Blurred Vision	↑Fatigue/Low Energy/Drowsiness	↑Pupils Unequal (R)
↑Balance Problems	↑Confusion	
↑Sensitivity to Light	↑Tingling or numbness in head/face, neck, or arms (R)	

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### Restrictions/Limitations:

- It is OK to do the following:
  - Ice head/neck for comfort
  - Rest/Sleep – in a dark room with eyes closed even if not sleeping
  - Go to School (unless otherwise directed by ATC, Nurse, or Doctor)
  - Eat a light diet
  - Go to Doctor/ER if in doubt about condition of athlete
- Do NOT:
  - Participate in any activity that increases your heart rate until cleared by a Certified Athletic Trainer or a Doctor

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- Take pain relievers – this can mask worsening symptoms
  - Drive
  - Eat spicy foods – especially if nausea is present
  - Limit:
    - TV, Computer, Texting
    - Video Games
    - IPods especially with headphones
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**Follow-Up Care:**

Please see your Athletic Trainer or appropriate healthcare professional, \_\_\_\_\_, for follow-up and re-evaluation on \_\_\_\_\_.

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