



CTE Hope

Research. Development. Support. Advocacy.

HOW DO I MANAGE A CONCUSSION?

When recovering from a concussion, a re-balancing of a delicate combination of chemicals within brain cells takes place. When properly managed, the majority of concussion symptoms will resolve completely within a couple of weeks. However, over-exertion of brain cells during recovery can cause symptoms to persist.

IMPORTANT INSTRUCTIONS FOR CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

- Do not wake up every hour – your brain needs to rest and sleep is beneficial
- You may use acetaminophen for a headache. Do NOT take ibuprofen or aspirin at any time during your concussion (if you are on prescription medications, consult your physician immediately)
- Avoid alcohol, excessive caffeine and spicy foods
- Minimize or limit use of electronic devices; such as phones, computers, and tv.
- Avoid all forms of video games during the acute stage
- Take mental breaks throughout the day – work or school – close your eyes and rest your head on your desk for 5-7 minutes
- Avoid activity that is physically demanding and mentally demanding
- Do not participate in sports or any activity until cleared by a medical professional who has experience with concussions
- An experienced medical professional will clear you to return to activity/ school/work. If you have an Athletic Trainer (ATC) at your school or work, consult them as soon as possible and learn the proper return to work/school/play protocol

If your work/school does not have an AT, please seek our resource page and you can be connected with different State Laws and Secondary School Websites.

WHEN TO SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION:

- Headache that does not improve or worsens with light everyday activity such as walking
- Weakness, numbness, and tingling in the arms and legs
- Decreased coordination
- Increased nausea or vomiting
- Unusual behavior
- Slurring speech
- Difficulty awakening and/or in-and-out of consciousness
- Changes in pupil reaction (one pupil larger than the other or not responsive)
- Seizure or convulsion activity
- Declining amnesia or loss of memory
- Easily and frequently confused
- Irritable and restless
- No appetite

WHAT SHOULD YOU DO IF YOU THINK YOU HAVE A CONCUSSION?

Consult with your certified athletic trainer and then consult a healthcare provider. Once structural damage is ruled out, follow these Do's and Don'ts:

OKAY TO DO	DO NOT DO	NO NEED TO...
Use Tylenol	Eat spicy foods, caffeine, alcohol	Check eyes with light
Apply ice to head or neck for comfort	Drink alcohol or take medications like Adderall	Wake up every hour
Eat a light meal	Drive a car	Stay in bed
Go to sleep	Use a computer, smart phone, watch TV, play video games, tablet, read, etc.	

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