

**UNIVERSITY OF UTAH
SPORTS ACTIVITIES
CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY
GUIDELINE G1-015A**

The University of Utah recognizes the seriousness of concussions and head injuries and takes seriously its obligation to address concussions that occur during University sponsored activities. The Utah Protection of Athletes with Head Injuries Act requires “amateur sports organizations,” which may include the University of Utah, to adopt and enforce a concussion and head injury policy/guideline for minors who participate in a University of Utah sporting event.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles, even if they do not directly hit their head. The potential for concussions is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common. Concussions can occur, however, in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity.

SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS

The following are signs and symptoms which may indicate that a participant in a sports activity has incurred a concussion:

- Loss of consciousness
- Seizures or convulsions
- Confusion or disorientation
- Amnesia—loss of memory to events before or after
- Feeling ‘in a fog’, ‘zoned out’
- Vacant stare, ‘glassy eyed’
- Slurred/incoherent speech
- Irritability
- Excessive drowsiness
- Complains of headache
- Nausea/Vomiting
- Clumsiness/lack of coordination
- Dizziness
- Inability to focus
- Has a behavior/personality change
- Visual disturbance, including light sensitivity, blurry vision or double vision

POSSIBLE CONSEQUENCES OF CONTINUING PARTICIPATION AFTER A CONCUSSION

Any participant who experiences a sign or symptom after a bump or blow to the head should immediately be removed from participation and evaluated by a qualified health care professional. A participant who continues to play after receiving a concussion, or who returns to play before the brain has recovered from a concussion, is at risk of slower recovery from the injury and has an increased likelihood of having long-term problems. Such problems may include brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death.

PROTOCOL FOR A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

- When a participant shows any signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion, the participant will be immediately removed from practice or competition.
- When available, the participant will be evaluated at the practice or competition facility by a licensed athletic trainer or other appropriate health care professional.
- As soon as practical after the suspected concussion, the parent of the minor participant will be notified as follows:
 - That their child has exhibit signs of a concussion;
 - That their child must be evaluated by a qualified health care professional—a person licensed by the state of Utah who is qualified to evaluate and manage a concussion within the course and scope of their health care practice; and
 - That their child will not be allowed to continue participation in the sports activity until the University is presented with a written statement from the qualified health care professional that the child is cleared to resume participation in the sports events.
- The child will be allowed to resume participation in sports activities only upon receipt from the parent of a written statement from the qualified health care professional. The written statement must be signed by the health care professional and specifically state:
 - That the health care professional has, within the years of the date of the written statement, completed a continuing education course in the evaluation and management of concussions; and
 - That the child is cleared to resume participation in sports activities.

CONCUSSION EDUCATION

Staff training: Each year, prior to the beginning of any sporting event (including a game, practiced, camp, physical education class, competition or tryout) all University staff involved with the sporting event shall receive training on the nature and risks of concussion, the signs and symptoms of concussion, and the protocol for addressing suspected concussions during camp activities. Each staff member will be provided with a copy of this Concussion and Head Injury Guideline.

Parent Notification: During the registration process for a University activity involving a sporting event, a parent or legal guardian for minor participant (under 18 years of age) shall receive a copy of this Concussion and Head Injury Guideline. The parent/legal guardian will be required to submit a signed acknowledgment that they have received the guideline, that they understand the guideline, and that they will abide by the guideline.

*For more information regarding sports related concussions, please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at:

[HEADS UP to Brain Injury](#)
[Awareness | HEADS UP | CDC](#)
[Injury Center](#)