

HVA Concussion Information Form

A **concussion** is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. Concussions can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly. In other words, even a "ding" or a bump on the head can be serious. You cannot see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Symptoms may include one or more of the following:

- Headaches
- "Pressure in head"
- Nausea or vomiting
- Neck pain
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish or slowed down
- Feeling foggy or groggy
- Drowsiness (forgetting game plays)
- Repeating the same question/comment
- Amnesia
- "Don't feel right"
- Fatigue or low energy
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Irritability
- More emotional
- Confusion
- Concentration or memory problems
- Change in sleep patterns

Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:

- Appears dazed
- Confused about assignment
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Answers questions slowly
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can't recall events after hit
- Any change in typical behavior or personality
- Vacant facial expression
- Forgets plays
- Moves clumsily or displays incoordination
- Slurred speech
- Can't recall events prior to hit
- Seizures or convulsions
- Loses consciousness

What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often fail to report symptoms of injuries. Concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key to a student-athlete's safety.

HVA Concussion Policy:

Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from the HVA activity and shall not return that day. Following the day the concussive symptoms occur, the student-athlete may return to practice or play only after a medical release has been issued by a medical doctor. Any health care professional, certified coach or referee may identify concussive signs, symptoms or behaviors of a student athlete during any type of athletic activity. Once concussive signs are identified, only a medical doctor can clear an athlete to return to play.

If you think your child has suffered a concussion:

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion should be removed from the game or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity on the same day he/she sustained an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear. The athlete may return the following day or anytime thereafter with written clearance from a medical doctor. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. You should also inform your child's coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it's better to miss one game than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

I have reviewed this information on concussions and am aware that a release by a medical doctor is required before a student may return to play under this policy.

Athlete's Name: _____

Athlete's Signature: _____

Date: _____

If the Athlete is under 18 years of age:

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name: _____

Parent/Legal Guardian's Signature: _____

Date: _____