

LACEY TOWNSHIP PARENT/GUARDIAN CONCUSSION POLICY ACKNOWLEDGEMENT FORM

In order to help protect the student-athletes of New Jersey, the NJSIAA has mandated that all athletes, parents/guardians and coaches follow the NJSIAA Concussion Policy. Additionally, the Lacey Township School District's Prevention and Treatment of Sports-Related Concussions and Head Injuries policy # 2431.4 parallels that mandate.

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They may 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 can't see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness. Signs and symptoms of a concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child/player 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:

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| 1. | Headache |
| 2. | Nausea/vomiting |
| 3. | Balance problems or dizziness |
| 4. | Double vision or changes in vision |
| 5. | Sensitivity to light or sound/noise |
| 6. | Feeling of sluggishness or fogginess |
| 7. | Difficulty with concentration, short-term memory, and/or confusion |
| 8. | Irritability or agitation |
| 9. | Depression or anxiety |
| 10. | Sleep disturbance |

SIGNS OBSERVED BY TEAMMATES, PARENTS AND COACHES INCLUDE:

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| 1. | Appears dazed, stunned or disoriented |
| 2. | Forgets plays or demonstrates short-term memory difficulties (e.g. is unsure of the game, score or opponent) |
| 3. | Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination |
| 4. | Answers questions slowly or inaccurately |
| 5. | Loses consciousness |
| 6. | Demonstrates behavior or personality changes |
| 7. | Is unable to recall events prior to or after the hit |

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

Athletes with signs and symptoms of concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young 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 under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

If you think you child/player 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 after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear. Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours.

An athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at the time and may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a medical doctor or doctor of Osteopathy, trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from the health care provider.

The NJSIAA recognizes that a majority of member schools employ the services of the athletic trainer. All health care providers who work under the supervision of a licensed physician, athletic trainers serve as an extension of the physician, and play a key role in a concussion education and management program. Schools that employ athletic trainers should ensure they play a central role in the school's concussion education and management program.

RETURN-TO-PLAY GUIDELINES:

NJSIAA member high schools that partake in interscholastic athletics shall develop a written policy to address incidents of suspected or actual concussion among participants that are involved in the district programs. A student-athlete who is suspected of sustaining or who has sustained a concussion and/or has become unconscious during an athletic event shall not return-to-play until (s)he meets all of the following criteria:

1. Immediate removal from play and no return-to-play that day.

2. Medical evaluation to determine the presence/absence of concussion.

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*** CONTINUATION OF RETURN-TO-PLAY GUIDELINES**

3. It is recommended that the student-athlete diagnosed with a concussion complete a symptom-free week initiated on the first asymptomatic day before initiating a graduated 5 day return-to-play exercise protocol. The student-athlete must be monitored during this time period for any reoccurrence of concussion symptoms.
4. If the student-athlete exhibits a re-emergence of any post-concussion signs or symptoms once they return-to-play, they will be removed from exertional maneuvers and return to his/her primary care physician or the team doctor for reevaluation.
5. If concussion symptoms reoccur during the graduated return-to-play exercise protocol, the student-athlete will return to the previous level of activity that caused no symptoms and then advance as tolerated.
6. Utilization of available tools such as symptom checklist and balance testing are suggested.

FINAL STATEMENTS:

The NJSIAA recognizes that although outside of our purview, student-athletes must also return to the classroom post-concussion. NJSIAA member high schools shall recognize that the aforementioned signs and symptoms of concussion also impact the student-athlete in their academic pursuits which can cause a deleterious effect on their ability to function in the classroom, learn new material, complete homework and study for tests. Parents/guardians should also be aware that driving may be impaired during the post-concussion period.

Please note that return to sports clearance that is inconsistent with our concussion policy may not be accepted and these matters will be referred to our school physician.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions, you can go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/ConcussionInYouthSports/>

www.nfhslearn.com

www.ATSNJ.org