

Concussion Policy at Wooster School

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are 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 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:	Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · 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 · Change in sleep patterns · Amnesia · “Don’t feel right” · Fatigue or low energy · Sadness · Nervousness or anxiety · Irritability · More emotional · Confusion · Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays) · Repeating the same question/comment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Appears dazed · Vacant facial expression · Confused about assignment · Forgets plays · Is unsure of game, score, or opponent · Moves clumsily or displays lack of coordination · Answers questions slowly · Slurred speech · Shows behavior or personality changes · Can’t recall events prior to hit · Can’t recall events after hit · Seizures or convulsions · Any change in typical behavior or personality · Loses consciousness

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In the interest of student safety and well-being, it is Wooster School policy that all students suspected of and/or displaying signs and symptoms of a concussion be evaluated by a physician. Although we encourage early cognitive and physical rest, when symptoms stabilize the student may return to the classroom. However, while symptomatic the student is not expected to do cognitive work until symptom free. In the event that symptoms worsen during class, the following protocol should be followed:

1. Refer the student to the nurse to have the visit documented and allow student to rest in the Health Center.
2. Student should return to class if symptoms return to baseline levels.
3. If symptoms do not return to baseline levels within an hour or so, the nurse will call home and dismiss student in order to get more rest.

As part of the School's wellness program, all students in grades 9 and 11 are required to take the ImPACT neurocognitive test as well as any student who does not have an ImPACT baseline test already on file.

To learn more about ImPACT please visit <http://www.impacttest.com/about/background> .

All new students in any Upper School grade will take the ImPACT test prior to participating in the athletic program.

Students who suffer a concussion during the sports season will take a post-concussion ImPACT test when symptoms resolve or improve to an acceptable level.

A student may not attend non-academic activities (coffee houses, midnight runs, etc.) until he or she has normal neurocognitive test scores (normal relative to their baseline score). A student may not return to play until he or she has normal neurocognitive test scores (normal relative to their baseline score) and completed the return to play protocol below:

- I. Day 1- 20 minute walk on treadmill or outside when possible (if no signs/symptoms present move to Day 2)
- II. Day 2- 20 minute jog on treadmill or outside when possible (if no signs/symptoms present move to Day 3)
- III. Day 3- 25 minute run on a treadmill followed by sport specific exercises/drills with the athletic trainer (if no signs/symptoms present move to Day 4)
- IV. Day 4-Participate in full practice avoiding all contact drills
- V. Day 5-Participate in a full contact practice (if no signs/symptoms present student is granted full clearance to return to sport)

Although the above provides a specific protocol by which we handle concussions, it is important to note that every concussion is different; there will be times when a concussion may need to be treated individually.

Based on research that demonstrates that multiple concussions have a negative long term effect on overall neurocognitive health, it is Wooster School's policy to establish the above approach to prevent a student from returning too early to the classroom and sport/activity after a concussion. Returning to full activity level while still symptomatic can result in second-impact syndrome and/or post-concussion syndrome.

If you have any questions, please don't hesitate to call Ron Hutchins, Certified Athletic Trainer, at 203-830-3994.