

### **What is a concussion?**

A concussion is a type of brain injury that changes the way the brain normally works. A concussion is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. It can also occur from a fall or blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Signs and symptoms can show up right away after an injury or may not appear or be noticed until hours or days after the injury.

### **The Facts:**

All concussions are serious.

Most concussions occur without loss of consciousness.

Recognition and proper response to concussions when they first occur can help aid recovery and prevent further injury, or even death.

### **If your child has experienced a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body, look for any of the following signs of a concussion:**

- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting
- Balance problems, dizziness
- Vision disturbance
- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbance
- Sensitivity to light and/or noise
- Confusion
- Sluggish, groggy, hazy feeling
- Emotional changes
- Concentration or memory problems

### **Your child should go to an emergency room right away for the following symptoms:**

- Severe drowsiness, cannot be awakened
- One pupil (the black part of the middle of the eye) larger than the other
- Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination
- Repeated vomiting
- Slurred speech
- Convulsions or seizures
- Confusion, restlessness, or agitation
- Unusual behavior
- Loss of consciousness

### **What should you do if you think your child has a concussion:**

1. Seek medical attention right away. A health care professional will be able to decide the best course of action for your child.
2. Keep your child out of play. Children who return to play too soon while the brain is still healing risk a greater chance of having a repeat concussion. It can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. For the first three to five days complete cognitive rest: no reading, homework, text messaging, video game playing, computer use, driving, or work. It is best to stay at home and rest in a quiet environment.

Rest and time are the only proven remedies that work to heal concussions. This may mean taking a temporary leave of absence from school, shortening of the school day, reduction of workload, and allowance of more time to complete assignments or take test.

*\*According to a recent study at Boston Children's Hospital, those who take the most time off from tasks that require a lot of thinking had the quickest recovery from headaches, dizziness, nausea, and other concussion symptoms.\**

### **Return to School:**

Contact the school nurse and the school counselor when your child is ready to return to school. An academic plan will be put in place. This may include any of the following recommendations: rest breaks, spending fewer hours at school, extra time to take tests or complete assignments, and reduced time spent reading, writing, or on the computer. This plan is in place until your child is symptom free.

### **Return to Play:**

Once symptom free, a graduated return to play is initiated by the doctor. If post-concussion symptoms return then play is halted until symptom free.

**PLEASE REPORT ANY HEAD  
INJURY (SPORTS RELATED AND  
NON-SPORTS RELATED) TO YOUR  
CHILD'S SCHOOL NURSE RIGHT  
AWAY.**

School nurse contact information:

**Westborough High School**

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**Fales Elementary School**

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**Hastings Elementary School**

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**References:**

<http://cdc.gov/concussion>

**Resources:**

**Boston Children's Hospital Sports Concussion  
Clinic**

**Massachusetts General Hospital Youth Sports  
Concussion Clinic**



**WESTBOROUGH  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

# Head Injury Information

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