



During today's practice/game participation your student-athlete sustained a head injury that requires vital monitoring. Below is a list of signs and symptoms that can occur after sustaining such an injury. Symptoms may show up immediately following the injury or in some cases several hours later. If any of the signs and symptoms listed below present the athlete should seek immediate medical attention. If you are questioning whether to seek medical attention it is recommended that you do so immediately.

The following signs and symptoms (complaints) mandate IMMEDIATE EMERGENCY ROOM evaluation:

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| *Headaches that significantly worsen | *Looks very drowsy/can't be awakened | |
| *Can't recognize people or places | *Repeated vomiting | *Seizures |
| *Increasing confusion or irritability | *Unusual behavioral change | *Focal neurologic signs |
| *Change in state of consciousness | *Weakness or numbness in arms/legs | *Slurred Speech |
| *Blood or watery fluid from ears or nose | *Unequal or dilated pupils | *Asymmetry of the face |

General Recommendations:

- ✓ Rest is the key. Do not participate in ANY activities if any signs or symptoms exist. Be sure to get enough sleep at night – no late nights. Take naps or rest breaks as needed.
- ✓ It is important to limit activities that require a lot of thinking or concentration (called cognitive rest), as this can make signs and symptoms worse, which may prolong healing. This includes but is not limited to: texting, operating a computer, watching television, playing video games and reading.
- ✓ With ANY injury, a full recovery will reduce the chances of getting hurt again. Second-Impact Syndrome is VERY serious. It is better to miss a few games than to be severely injured for your season, or indefinitely.

Return to Participation:

As adopted from the National Federation of High School Sports recommendations and in accordance with Alabama state law and AHSAA policy: Any student-athlete who exhibits signs, symptoms or behaviors consistent with a concussion shall be removed from the contest and **shall not return that day**. Following the day of the concussion symptoms occur, the student-athlete may return to practice or play **only after a medical release** has been issued by a medical doctor.

Once an athlete no longer has signs, symptoms, or behaviors of a concussion **and is cleared to return to activity by a medical doctor**, he or she should proceed in a step-wise fashion to allow the brain to re-adjust to exercise. In most cases, the athlete will progress one step each day over 5-6 days as directed by a qualified healthcare professional, such as a licensed Athletic Trainer (AT).

The return to activity program schedule **may proceed following medical clearance**.

Remember: Please realize head injuries and the study of Mild Traumatic Brain Injury (MTBI), also known as concussion, is continually evolving. PlaySafe Alabama strives to use the most up-to-date information. If you experience signs or symptoms that vary from the above mentioned ones err on the side of caution and seek further medical attention from a qualified healthcare provider.

Sources:

- "Consensus Statement on Concussion in Sport: The 5th International Conference on Concussion in Sport Held in Berlin, October 2016." Br J Sports Med, 2017;51:838-847.
- National Federation of High Schools (NFHS) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Guidelines can be found at: <http://www.nfhs.org/media/1020401/suggested-guidelines-for-management-of-concussion-in-sports-april-2019-final.pdf>
- Alabama High School Activities Association (AHSAA) Sports Medicine Advisory Committee (SMAC) Policy & Resources can be found at: <http://www.ahsaa.com/Portals/0/PDF's/AHSAA/Safety/Concussion.pdf?ver=2017-05-23-075232-413>
- National Athletic Training Association Resource Page can be found at: <http://www.nata.org/practice-patient-care/health-issues/concussion>