**FACTS FOR COACHES**

**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 prevent further injury or even death.

A bump, blow, or jolt to the head can cause a concussion, a type of traumatic brain injury (TBI). Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

On the lacrosse field, concussions can result from a fall, being struck in the head by the stick or ball, or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles.

**RECOGNIZING A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION**

To help recognize a concussion, watch for or ask others to report the following two things among your athletes:

1. A forceful bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.

   -- and --

2. Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning, or any other signs or symptoms of concussion. (See the Signs and Symptoms chart.)

Athletes who experience any of the signs and symptoms listed on the next page after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it’s OK to return to play.

**IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS A CONCUSSION:**

**DON'T ASSESS IT YOURSELF. TAKE HIM/HER OUT OF PLAY. SEEK THE ADVICE OF A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL. IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.**

For more information and safety resources, visit: [cdc.gov/Concussion](http://cdc.gov/Concussion) and [uslacrosse.org/HeadsUpLacrosse](http://uslacrosse.org/HeadsUpLacrosse)
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WHEN IN DOUBT, SIT THEM OUT!

Most athletes with a concussion will recover quickly and fully. But for some athletes, signs and symptoms of concussion can last for days, weeks, or longer. Exercising or activities that involve a lot of concentration, such as studying, working on the computer, or playing video games may cause concussion symptoms (such as headache or tiredness) to reappear or get worse. After a concussion, physical and cognitive activities—such as thinking and learning—should be carefully managed and monitored by a health care professional.

It is normal for athletes to feel frustrated, sad, and even angry because they cannot return to sports right away or cannot keep up with their school work. Talk with the athletes about these issues and offer support and encouragement.
If you think your athlete has a concussion:
DON’T ASSESS IT YOURSELF. TAKE HIM/HER OUT OF PLAY.
SEEK THE ADVICE OF A HEALTH CARE PROFESSIONAL.
IT’S BETTER TO MISS ONE GAME THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

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If you suspect that an athlete has a concussion, implement your four-step action plan:

1. **Remove the athlete from play.** Look for signs and symptoms of a concussion if your athlete has experienced a bump or blow to the head or body. When in doubt, sit them out.

2. **Ensure that the athlete is evaluated by a health care professional experienced in evaluating for concussion.** Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Health care professionals have a number of methods that they can use to assess the severity of concussions. As a coach, recording the following information can help health care professionals in assessing the athlete after the injury:
   - Cause of the injury and force of the hit or blow to the head or body
   - Any loss of consciousness (passed out/knocked out) and if so, for how long
   - Any memory loss immediately following the injury
   - Any seizures immediately following the injury
   - Number of previous concussions (if any)

3. **Inform the athlete’s parents or guardians about the possible concussion and give them information on concussion.** This fact sheet can help parents monitor the athlete for signs or symptoms that appear or get worse once the athlete is at home or returns to school.

4. **Keep the athlete out of play the day of the injury and until an appropriate health care professional says they are symptom-free and it’s OK to return to play.**

**IF YOU THINK YOUR ATHLETE HAS A CONCUSSION:**

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