

SPRING-FORD SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

Parent/Guardian and Student Athlete Concussion Acknowledgement Form

The following information is being provided to parents and student athletes to increase the awareness of and recommended treatment for sports related concussions as required by Pennsylvania Act 101

Fast Facts

- A concussion is a brain injury and all 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.
- Children and teens are more likely to get a concussion and take longer to recover than adults.
- Approximately 10% of all contact sport athletes sustain concussions yearly.
- Effects of concussion are cumulative in athletes who return to play prior to complete recovery*.
*2011 Sports Concussion Institute
- Recognition/proper management when they first occur can help prevent further injury or even death. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. 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 mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

Concussions can occur in *any* sport or recreation activity. So, all coaches, parents, and athletes need to learn concussion signs and symptoms and what to do if a concussion occurs.

How do you recognize a concussion?

To help recognize a concussion, you should watch for the following two things among your athletes:

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

AND

- Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.

Athletes who experience *any* of the signs and symptoms listed below after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body should be kept out of play the day of the injury. Any athlete that sustains a concussion should be kept out of play until a physician, experienced in evaluating concussions, says they are symptom-free and provides written medical clearance allowing a step-wise return to play.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

Physical

Headache
Fatigue
Dizziness
Photophobia
Sensitivity to noise
Nausea
Balance problems
Loss of Consciousness
Vision difficulty

Cognitive

Difficulty remembering
Difficulty concentrating
Feeling slowed down
Feeling in a fog
Slowed reaction times
Altered attention
Amnesia

Emotional

Behavioral changes
Irritability
Sadness
Feeling emotional
Nervousness
Anxiety

Sleep

Sleep more than usual
Sleep less than usual
Drowsiness
Trouble falling asleep

Complete physical, cognitive, emotional, and social rest is advised while the student athlete is experiencing symptoms and signs of a concussion/traumatic brain injury. Minimize mental exertion, overstimulation, cell phone and computer usage, as well as video gaming and multi-tasking etc.

Second Impact Syndrome (SIS)

Second impact syndrome is a very rare condition in which a second concussion occurs before a first concussion has properly healed, causing rapid and severe brain swelling and often catastrophic results. Second impact syndrome can result from even a very mild concussion that occurs days or weeks after the initial concussion. Most cases of second impact syndrome occur in young athletes and this is why it is IMPERATIVE that if a student-athlete is suspected of having a concussion, he/she does not return to play until he/she is evaluated by proper medical staff.

Symptoms of SIS include:

- Dilated pupils
- Loss of eye movement
- Unconsciousness
- Respiratory Failure
- Death

In many cases, second impact syndrome is fatal. In those cases where it isn't fatal, you can expect the long-term effects to be similar to those of severe traumatic brain injury.

Spring-Ford Concussion Policy

Return to Play

Any athlete who is suspected of having a concussion will be immediately removed from activity and not be permitted to return to sports that same day. Any athlete who sustains a concussion will not be permitted to return to sports until they have written medical release with no limitations from the athlete's physician. Additionally, any athlete who has sustained a concussion MUST follow the below stepwise progression. The athlete should be symptom free before beginning this progression. The athlete should complete each level and progress to the next if they remain asymptomatic both at rest and with provocative exercise.

Rehabilitation Stage	Functional Exercise
1. No activity	Complete physical and cognitive rest
2. Light aerobic activity	Walking, swimming, stationary cycling at 70% maximum heart rate; no resistance exercises
3. Sport-specific exercise	Specific sport-related drills but no head impact
4. Noncontact training drills	More complex drills, may start light resistance training
5. Full-contact practice	After medical clearance, participate in normal training
6. Return to play	Normal game play

Each stage in concussion rehabilitation should last no less than 24 hours with a minimum of 5 days required to consider a full return to competition. If symptoms recur during the rehabilitation program, the athlete should stop immediately. Once asymptomatic after at least another 24 hours, the athlete should resume at the previous asymptomatic level and try to progress again. Athletes should contact their health care provider if symptoms recur. Any athlete with multiple concussions or prolonged symptoms may require a longer concussion-rehabilitation program, which is ideally created by a physician who is experienced in concussion management.

Neuropsychological Testing

We perform pre-season baseline and post-concussion neuropsychological testing using the ImPACT[®] (Immediate Post Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) software program to aid in the management of head injuries. Baseline tests are valid for two years. All student athletes in grades 7, 9 and 11, and their parents must sign the ImPact permission form available in the physical packet. The exam takes about 20 minutes and is non-invasive. The program is basically set up as a “video-game” type format. It tracks neuro-cognitive information such as memory, reaction time, brain processing speed and concentration. For example, in the word memory section, twelve words appear one at a time on the screen for about one second each. The athlete is then later asked what words were displayed.

If a concussion is suspected, the athlete will be required to re-take the test. Both the baseline and post-injury test data is given to your family doctor. The test data will enable your doctor to determine when return-to-play is appropriate and safe for the injured athlete. If an injury of this nature occurs to your child, you will be promptly contacted with all the details. Information about ImPact is available at www.impacttest.com

