

Sports Related Head Injury Regulations/Protocols

Goal:

To standardize assessment and treatment of students with head injuries in order to optimize recovery to normal physical and academic function.

Section I. What is a Concussion?

Concussion means a complex disturbance in brain function, due to direct or indirect trauma to the head, related to neurometabolic dysfunction, rather than structural injury.

Section II. Mechanism of Injury:

A concussion is caused by a bump, blow or jolt to the head or body. Any force that causes the brain to bounce around or twist within the skull can cause a concussion. A bump, blow or jolt to the head or body can be caused by either indirect or direct trauma.

Section 111. Signs and Symptoms:

Signs (what you observe):

- Confusion
- Forgets plays
- Unsure about game, score, opponent
- Altered coordination
- Balance problems
- Personality change
- Slow response to questions
- Forgets events prior and/or after injury

- Loss of consciousness

Symptoms (reported by athlete):

- Headache
- Fatigue
- Nausea or vomiting
- Double/blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light (photophobia)
- Sensitivity to noise (tinnitus)
- Feels sluggish
- Feels foggy
- Problems concentration and/ or remembering
- Trouble with sleeping/excess sleep
- Dizziness
- Seeing stars
- Vacant stare/glassy eyed
- Nervousness
- Irritability
- Inappropriate emotions

If any of the above signs or symptoms are observed after a suspected blow to the head, jaw, spine or body, they may be indicative of a concussion and **the student**

athlete must be removed from play immediately and not allowed to return until cleared by a medical evaluation. (105CMR 201.006 (A)(8))

Section IV. Prevention/Education:

1. Department of Public Health approved annual training (information regarding this training will be included in the Athletic Packets), of coaches, certified athletic trainers, school nurses, athletic directors, volunteers, school and/or team Physicians, parents of student athletes and student athletes, in the prevention and recognition of a sports-related head injury, including second impact syndrome, and documentation of each person's completion of such training. The Athletic Director and/or Athletic Trainer will be responsible for obtaining this documentation.

2. Athletic Director and Nursing will review the pre-participation forms (APS Required Medical and Parent Permission Form and Physical Exam Form). **Prior history of a head injury must be noted on the Required Medical and Parent Permission Form.** If a student athlete has a history of a head injury the school nurse will be responsible for:

- addressing any questions raised by the Athletic Director
- communicating with the coach, and/or Athletic Director and/or Athletic Trainer regarding the student's concussion history
- following up with parents and student as needed prior to the student's participation in school sponsored extracurricular athletic activities

3. The Health Services Department will keep statistics regarding head injuries for the purpose of improving care and prevention.

4. A brief concussion education program, which includes information explaining the need for academic restrictions, will be part of a general AHS staff meeting.

Section V. Reports of Head Injury during the Sports Season

1. The "Report of Head Injury Form" will be distributed to all coaches annually. Coaches will be instructed to fill out the form immediately after the game or

practice for head injuries that result in the athlete being removed from play due to a possible concussion. Coaches should also follow-up with the Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director and call the parent/guardian the day/night of the injury. The Athletic Director or Athletic Trainer will notify the school nurse. The school nurse will contact the athlete's parents and provide follow-up instructions. The school nurse will also notify the athlete's guidance counselor and teachers if needed.

Section VI. Medical Clearance for Return to Play

(Regulation: 105 CMR 201.011.)

If an athlete is removed from play for a suspected concussion, he or she must be medically cleared and evaluated before returning to play or practice. If the athlete was diagnosed with a concussion, the medical clearance can only be provided **after** he or she has completed a graduated return to play plan indicating that they are ready to resume physical activity. The Athletic Trainer will be responsible for the **graduated return to play plan**. A "Sports Related Head Injury Medical Clearance Form" will be given to the parents. In order for the athlete to resume extracurricular athletic activity this form must be completed by:

- A duly licensed physician
- A duly licensed certified athletic trainer in consultation with a licensed physician
- A duly licensed nurse practitioner in consultation with a licensed physician
- A duly licensed neuropsychologist in coordination with the physician managing the student's recovery.

This form will be kept by the School Nurse and shared with the Athletic Trainer and Athletic Director.

Section VII. Post-Concussion Graduated Reentry Plans

Recovery from a concussion requires rest, both physical and cognitive, in order for the brain to heal. A graduated reentry plan, to either academics or sports, should not begin until a student is symptom free at rest.

The School Nurse will explain the need for academic and physicals restrictions to the student and parent. The “Head Injury Restrictions letter” will be sent to guidance and teachers by mail or email. A plan will be developed by the School Nurse, student’s guidance counselor, student’s teachers, athletic trainer and parents in consultation with the student’s physician who made the diagnosis or who is managing the student’s recovery. The nurse is to be notified if a post concussive student becomes symptomatic after returning to physical activity or academics.

Section VIII. Inclusion of Head Injury and Concussion Policy in the Student and Parent Handbook

The Head Injury and Concussion Policy and Protocols will be available in the AHS student and parent handbook and also on the APS School Health Services web site and the Athletic Department web site.

Section IX. Forms/Letters

1. Report of Head Injury during Sports Season
2. Head Injury Referral Letter
3. Head Injury Restrictions
4. Post Sports-Related Head Injury Medical Clearance Form
5. Parental Notice of Head Injury

Approved by School Committee, January 26, 2012