

# CONCUSSION AND THE ATHLETE

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury sustained from a hit to the head, neck, face or body that may cause immediate and/or long-term problems. The force of the impact to the body causes the head and brain to shake back and forth. Following this impact, an athlete may experience some of the following symptoms:

## EMERGENCY WARNING SIGNS

### SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION FOR ANY OF THESE SYMPTOMS

Any loss of consciousness	One pupil (black part in center of eye) is larger than the other
Drowsiness or cannot be awakened	A headache that gets worse and does not go away
Weakness, numbness or decreased coordination	Repeated vomiting or nausea
Slurred speech	Difficulty recognizing people or places
Convulsions or seizures	Behavior or personality changes

## CONCUSSION SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS: WHY IT MATTERS

Knowing the symptoms to look out for helps health care professionals prescribe more optimal treatments for the athlete's return to play and activity plan. If pre-season cognitive testing was completed, this can be used as an additional tool for the health care expert.

Treatment may include activity modifications, medications, supplements, or referrals based on symptom areas experienced by the athlete.

## WHAT TO DO IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED

- When in doubt, hold them out! Know which signs and symptoms to look for.
- Know your team's emergency protocols and where you should take the athlete for further help.
- Oregon law requires that any youth athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion must be removed from play or practice and must be cleared by a medical professional before returning to activity.

## HOW PROVIDENCE CAN HELP

Providence Sports Medicine offers 7-day-a-week access to sports medicine experts who can help you. Schedule an appointment by calling **503-29-SPORT**.

To learn more about concussion guidelines and how to return to activities, visit [ProvidenceOregon.org/sportsmedicine](http://ProvidenceOregon.org/sportsmedicine)

