

## Tips for recovery...

- › Complete rest; no strenuous or contact activity while symptoms are still present.
- › Return to physical activity slowly once symptoms have passed.
- › Avoid activities that could lead to a second concussion until your doctor says that you are well enough and all symptoms have passed.
- › Ask your doctor when you should begin driving again, as your reaction time may be slower for awhile.
- › Take only those drugs and natural supplements that your doctor has approved.
- › Do not drink alcohol until your doctor says you are well enough to do so. Alcohol and other drugs may slow your recovery and put you at risk for further injury and seizures.
- › Problems **usually** go away with time and without treatment. However, if problems continue, help is available such as educational material, education sessions and links with community services. Contact the number on the back of the pamphlet for more information.

## For more information on concussion/mild brain injury contact:

### Provincial Acquired Brain Injury Education and Prevention Coordinator

Saskatchewan Health  
3475 Albert Street  
Regina, Saskatchewan  
S4S 6X6

Tel (306) 787.0802  
Fax (306) 787.7095  
[kfroehlich@health.gov.sk.ca](mailto:kfroehlich@health.gov.sk.ca)

### Helpful Websites:

[www.concussionsafety.com](http://www.concussionsafety.com)  
[www.thinkfirst.ca](http://www.thinkfirst.ca)  
[www.abipartnership.sk.ca](http://www.abipartnership.sk.ca)



## Concussion/ Mild Brain Injury

### NOTE:

*This pamphlet is for information only.  
Do not attempt to treat a concussion.  
Always consult a physician.*

## What is a concussion?

A concussion is a “mild” injury to the brain caused by rapid movement of the head so that the brain is slammed against the inside of its protective skull. This event interferes with the function of the brain cells resulting in a change in a person’s mental function. Your head does not need to strike anything for a concussion to occur, nor do you need to lose consciousness or suffer amnesia.

You do not have to be “knocked out” to have a concussion.

## Are all concussions the same?

No. Many classifications of severity/grade of concussion exist. The grade of concussion is determined based on the presence of symptoms, their severity at the time of concussion and on repeated evaluation.

The grade of concussion does not determine the speed of recovery. Other factors such as a history of concussions may mean longer recovery time.

Research shows that people who have received an initial concussion, are up to four times more likely to receive another concussion, than someone who has never had one.

## What are the signs and symptoms of concussion?

If any one of the below symptoms is present, a concussion should be suspected. Symptoms can last days, weeks or in some cases longer.

### Early signs of a concussion may include:

- › General confusion
- › Nausea and vomiting
- › Dizziness and/or “seeing stars”
- › Strange behaviour and unusual emotions
- › Slurred speech
- › Headache
- › Slow to respond to questions
- › Lack of coordination and balance
- › Loss of consciousness

### Late signs of a concussion may include:

- › Persistent headache
- › Poor attention
- › Depressed mood
- › Irritability
- › Memory problems
- › Blurred vision or a loss of field of vision
- › Tiredness
- › Anxiety
- › Restlessness
- › Ringing in ears
- › Change in sleeping pattern
- › Sensitivity to sound and/or light

Remember ... any grade of concussion has the potential to be a serious injury. Always consult a physician.

## Recognizing concussion in sport...

Players who have suffered a concussion may minimize or deny symptoms in order to stay in the game. Having knowledge of the player’s personality and an understanding of the signs and symptoms of concussion can prevent further injury, long-term damage or catastrophic outcome.

### Facial expression

- › Vacant stare, confused look

### Behaviour

- › Not typical for that person, distracted, emotional

### Memory

- › Confusion of place, time, date

### Post traumatic amnesia

- › No memory of events for a period of time after the injury

If symptoms of concussion are detected, the person should not be allowed to return to the game. The person should be removed from play, closely watched and assessed by a physician. Close and repeated monitoring is very important; some symptoms may take a few minutes to appear.

**No athlete should be returned to play until a doctor has cleared them, and they no longer have any symptoms at rest or under exertion.**

When in doubt ... sit them out.