

CONCUSSION

HSU Student Health Center

September 2015

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury (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 fall or a blow to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. After a concussion, some people lose consciousness (“knocked out”) for a short time. However, most concussions do not result in a loss of consciousness. Not being able to remember events (amnesia) prior to, or following the injury, for a period of time is another sign of concussion. Yet, some people simply feel dazed or confused.¹

Symptoms of Concussion

Thinking/ Remembering	Physical	Emotional/ Mood	Sleep
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Difficulty thinking clearly ◆ Feeling slowed down ◆ Difficulty concentrating ◆ Difficulty remembering new information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Headache ◆ Fuzzy or blurry vision ◆ Nausea or vomiting ◆ Dizziness ◆ Sensitivity to noise or light ◆ Balance problems ◆ Feeling tired, having no energy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Irritability ◆ Sadness ◆ More emotional ◆ Nervousness or anxiety 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Sleeping more than usual ◆ Sleeping less than usual ◆ Trouble falling asleep ◆ Drowsiness

Source: Centers for Disease Control & Prevention



*“Most people with a concussion recover quickly and fully. **But for some people, symptoms can last for days, weeks, or longer.** Ignoring your symptoms and trying to ‘tough it out’ often makes symptoms worse.”*

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention

Tips for Getting Better

Rest Your Body

- ◆ Get plenty of sleep at night, and rest during the day. Take naps as needed.
- ◆ Avoid activities that are physically demanding (e.g., heavy housecleaning, running, biking, weightlifting/working-out). They can make your symptoms worse and slow your recovery.
- ◆ Avoid activities, such as contact or recreational sports, that could lead to another concussion. It is best to avoid roller coasters or other high speed rides that can make your symptoms worse or even cause a concussion.

Rest Your Mind

- ◆ Avoid sustained computer use, including computer/video games early in the recovery process. Avoid television and movies as much as possible. If you do watch television or movies, watch something you have already seen and does not require much concentration.
- ◆ Avoid stressful/emotional activities.
- ◆ Avoid activities that require a lot of concentration (e.g., doing math problems). If school work is making your symptoms worse you may need to take some time off.

Take Care of Yourself

- ◆ Eat regular healthy meals and snacks. Drink plenty of water.
- ◆ Avoid caffeine.
- ◆ Take only those medications that your health care professional has approved.
- ◆ Do not drink alcoholic beverages until your health care professional says you are well enough. Alcohol and other drugs may slow your recovery and put you at risk of further injury.



Next Steps.....

- ◆ Call the North Coast Concussion Program to schedule your ImPACT assessment (see details on next page).
- ◆ See your health care provider regularly. They will help you determine when you are ready to return to your normal activities.
- ◆ Because your ability to react may be slower after a concussion, ask your health care provider when you can safely drive a car, ride a bike, or operate heavy equipment.¹
- ◆ While you are healing, you should be very careful to avoid doing anything that could cause a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. On rare occasions, receiving another concussion before the brain has healed can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage, and even death.¹



Danger Signs:

Seek immediate medical attention if any of the following occur after a concussion:

Slurred speech	A headache that is worsening	Drowsiness	Increased confusion restlessness, or agitation
Weakness, numbness, or decreased coordination	Repeated vomiting	Loss of consciousness (passing out)	One pupil is larger than the other
Convulsions or seizures	Unable to recognize people or places		

Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment & Cognitive Testing

ImPACT (Immediate Post-Concussion Assessment and Cognitive Testing) is a scientifically validated computerized concussion evaluation system. The assessment, which takes about 25 minutes to complete, measures symptoms as well as verbal and visual memory, processing speed, and reaction time. Results can help health care providers, teachers, coaches, trainers, parents, and students assess changes in cognitive abilities, make decisions about academic needs, and track recovery after a concussion.³

All athletes should obtain a baseline assessment. If a concussion is suspected, the baseline report will serve as a comparison. Any student with a suspected concussion should obtain a test as soon as possible after the injury. The test can then be repeated at intervals of every 1-2 weeks to assess for improvement.³

Call to schedule your ImPACT assessment

North Coast Concussion Program
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References

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention <http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/>
2. Boston Children's Hospital <http://www.childrenshospital.org/health-topics/conditions/concussions>
3. ImPACT <http://impacttest.com/>

Resources on Campus

Student Health Center 707-826-3146 <http://www.humboldt.edu/health/>
North Coast Concussion Program 707-826-4540 <http://humboldt.edu/nccp/>
Student Disability Resource Center 707-826-4678 <http://www.humboldt.edu/disability/>