



NORTH TEXAS RVA – USA VOLLEYBALL

HEADS UP: CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

Response to Suspected Concussion

According to TEC section 38.156, an athlete ‘shall be removed from athletics practice or competition immediately if one of the following persons believes the student might have sustained a concussion during the practice or competition:

- (1) a coach;
- (2) a physician;
- (3) a licensed health care professional; or
- (4) the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student.

Facts:

- A concussion is a **brain injury**.
- All concussions are **serious**.
- Concussions can occur **without** loss of consciousness.
- Concussions can occur in **any sport**.
- Recognition and proper management of concussions when they **first occur** can help prevent further injury or even death.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is an injury that changes how the cells in the brain normally work. A concussion is caused by a blow to the head or body that causes the brain to move rapidly inside the skull. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious. Concussions can also result from a fall or from players colliding with each other or with obstacles even if they do not directly hit their head.

The potential for concussion is greatest in athletic environments where collisions are common. Concussions can occur, however, in any organized or unorganized sport or recreational activity. As many as 3.8 million sports and recreation---related concussions occur in the United States each year.

Recognizing a Possible Concussion

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

1. A forceful blow to the head or body that results in rapid movement of the head.
2. Any change in the athlete’s behavior, thinking, or physical functioning.

Signs Observed by Coaching Staff

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets sports plays
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows behavior or personality changes
- Can’t recall event prior to hit or fall
- Can’t recall events after hit or fall

Symptoms Reported by Athlete

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light
- Sensitivity to noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Does not “feel right”

Athletes who experience any of these signs or symptoms after a bump or blow to the head should be kept from play until given permission to return to play by a **health care professional** with experience evaluating for concussions. Signs and symptoms of concussion can last from several minutes, to days, weeks, months or even longer in some cases.

Remember, you can't see a concussion and some athletes may not experience and/or report symptoms until hours or days after the injury. If you have a suspicion that your athlete has a concussion, you should keep the athlete out of the game or practice.

PLAYERS' ACTION PLAN

What should I do if I think I have a concussion?

1. **Tell your coaches and your parents.** Never ignore a bump or blow to the head even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if one of your teammates might have a concussion.
2. **Get a medial check up.** A doctor or health care professional can tell you if you have a concussion and when you are OK to return to play.
3. **Give yourself time to get better.** If you have had a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is still healing, you are much more likely to have a second concussion. Second concussions can cause damage to your brain. It is important to rest until you get approval from a doctor or health care professional to return to play.

PARENTS' ACTION PLAN

What should you do if you think your child has a concussion?

1. **Seek medical attention right away.** A health care professional will be able to decide how serious the concussion is and when it is safe for your child to return to sports.
2. **Keep your child out of play.** Concussions take time to heal. Don't let your child return to play until a health care professional says it's OK. Children who return to play too soon – while the brain is still healing – risk a greater chance of having a second concussion. Second or later concussions can be very serious. They can cause permanent brain damage, affecting your child for a lifetime.
3. **Tell your child's coach about any recent concussion.** Coaches should know if your child had a recent concussion in any sport. Your child's coach may not know about a concussion your child received in another sport or activity unless you tell the coach.

Prevention and Preparation

How can concussions be prevented?

Every sport is different, but there are steps that athletes and their parents can take to protect them from concussions.

- Follow the coach's rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Practice good sportsmanship at all times.
- Use the right sports equipment, including personal protective gear (such as knee pads, mouth guards etc...)

Licensed Health Care Providers

What licensed health care providers are trained in the evaluation and treatment of concussions/ brain injuries and authorized to allow the athlete to return to play?

Medical Doctors (MD)
Doctor of Osteopathy (DO)
Advanced Registered Nurse Practitioner (ARNP)
Physician Assistant (PA)
Licensed Certified Athletic Trainers (ATC)

Research is currently being done to determine which other licensed health care providers may have sufficient training to qualify to authorize return to play.

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CONCUSSION IN YOUTH SPORTS

Parent/Player Form

I certify that I understand and will abide:

Return to Activity/Play Following concussion - According to TEC section 38.157: 'An athlete removed from athletics practice or competition under TEC Section 38.156 (believed that they might have sustained a concussion) may not be permitted to practice or compete again following the force or impact believed to have caused the concussion until:

(1) the athlete has been evaluated; using established medical protocols based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence, by a treating physician chosen by the student or the student's parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student;

(2) the athlete has successfully completed each requirement of the return-to-play protocol established under TEC Section 38.153 necessary for the student to return to play;

(3) the treating physician has provided a written statement indicating that, in the physician's professional judgment, it is safe for the student to return to play; and

(4) the athlete and the parent or guardian or another person with legal authority to make medical decisions for the student:

(A) have acknowledged that the athlete has completed the requirements of the return-to-play protocol necessary for the athlete to return to play;

(B) have provided the treating physician's written statement to the person responsible for compliance with the return-to-play protocol; and

(C) have signed a consent form indicating that the person signing: (i) has been informed concerning and consents to the athletes participating in returning to play in accordance with the return-to-play protocol; (ii) understands the risks associated with the athletes returning to play and will comply with any ongoing requirements in the return-to-play protocol;

(iii) consents to the disclosure to appropriate persons, consistent with the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (Pub. L. No. 104-191), of the treating physician's written statement under Subdivision (3) and, if any, the return-to-play recommendations of the treating physician; and

(iv) understands the immunity provisions under TEC Section 38.159.'

Player Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
(printed)

Parent Name: _____ Signature: _____ Date: _____
(printed)

SUBMIT THIS SIGNED PAGE TO YOUR CLUB BEFORE ANY PARTICIPATION