



# Newsletter

OCTOBER 2007

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## Sports Concussions: What you need to know

The fall sports season is well underway, as is the fall injury season. As kids return to school many are concentrating harder on their athletics than their studies. Unfortunately, an athletic injury can make this an even bigger challenge for parents and students. Concussions can be particularly difficult.

A concussion is a type of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) that range from mild to severe. Concussions can happen to any person, young or old, male or female and in ANY sport.

One of the biggest problems with sports concussions is lack of identification and understanding. As symptoms of a concussion may not appear for hours or even days, many youth are allowed to return to play too soon, greatly increasing their risk of a second, more serious concussion. According to the CDC, an additional concussion sustained before the brain has time to fully heal can result in brain swelling, permanent brain damage or death.

It is important that parents, coaches and players know that ALL concussions are

serious and learn to recognize the symptoms of a concussion. When a concussion is suspected medical attention must be sought.

Athletic injuries, including concussions, can be prevented by always wearing recommended safety equipment for every sport and always playing by the rules.

Please see the reverse side of this newsletter for a list of signs that will help you identify if you or a loved one is suffering from a concussion.

## Partnership Updates and Upcoming Events

**The Partnership is still accepting nominations for a Chair-elect.** The chair-elect serves for one year followed by one year as Chairperson. Nomination forms are available on the Partnership website at

[www.healthymaryland.org/safermaryland](http://www.healthymaryland.org/safermaryland)

Nominations are due by October 31, 2007 (date has been extended)

**CHAIR-ELECT  
 NOMINATIONS  
 ARE DUE  
 OCTOBER 31ST**

**BE A PART OF  
 THE PROCESS**

**EVENTS:**

**November 7:** Quarterly Partnership Meeting.

**Topic:** Poison Prevention

**Location:** Maryland Institute for Emergency Medical Services Systems, Baltimore.

Visit our website for details of these events.



# Signs and Symptoms of a Concussion:

## What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious.

## What are the signs and symptoms of concussion?

You can’t see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or can take days or weeks to appear. If your athlete reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, seek medical attention right away.

Signs Observed by Others	Symptoms Reported by Athlete
Appears dazed or stunned	Headache
Is confused about assignment	Nausea
Forgets plays	Balance problems or dizziness
Is unsure of game, score, or opponent	Double or fuzzy vision
Moves clumsily	Sensitivity to light or noise
Answers questions slowly	Feeling sluggish
Loses consciousness	Feeling foggy or groggy
Shows behavior or personality changes	Concentration or memory problems
Can’t recall events prior to hit	Confusion
Can’t recall events after hit	

## What should you do if you think your athlete has a concussion?

1. Seek medical attention right away.
2. Keep your athlete out of play.
3. Tell all of your athlete’s coaches about any recent concussion.

**It’s better to miss one game than the whole season**

Adapted from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Heads Up: Concussion in High School Sports. Free toolkit available at <http://www.cdc.gov/ncipc/tbi/>