

Waltham High Athlete Injury/Illness/Concussion Return to Play Protocol

It is crucial for athletes, coaches, and parents to promptly communicate with Courtney Bourne, ATC, regarding any injuries, illnesses, or concussions. Any injury, illness, or concussion not personally witnessed by Courtney must be reported within 24 hours of the incident. Coaches are responsible for reporting and communicating with Courtney about any injury, illness, or suspected concussion. However, athletes and parents also play a key role in reporting these issues to Courtney. Following this protocol ensures the safety and well-being of all our Waltham High athletes and supports their successful return to sport.

1. Pre-Season Injury/Illness/Concussion:

If an athlete begins their sports season with an injury, illness, or concussion that has been excused by their doctor, they must provide a clearance note to Courtney from the doctor before returning to play.

2. Minor Injury at Season Start:

If an athlete starts the season with a minor injury not excused by a doctor, they should consult Courtney, for guidance on managing the injury during the season.

3. Medical Advice Sought:

Athletes who seek any medical advice from their personal doctor, urgent care, emergency room, etc., must obtain a clearance note from that medical professional before returning to sport. Please note that neither Courtney or a physical therapist can clear an athlete to play unless instructed in writing by the athlete's doctor.

4. Illness:

If an athlete experiences any illness such as flu, COVID, stomach bug, respiratory If an athlete experiences any illness such as the flu, COVID-19, a stomach bug, respiratory issues, gastrointestinal problems, infections, skin infections, or chronic conditions, they must follow guidelines set by Waltham Public Schools.

Athletes must stay home from school and sports if they have a fever of over 100°F or if they are vomiting. They can return to school and sports once their symptoms have resolved for at least 24 hours, it has been 24 hours since the last vomiting episode, they have been fever-free for 24 hours without the use of over-the-counter medication, and they have been symptom-free for 24 hours without relying on OTC medication.

If the athlete has missed practice or a game due to illness, they must be cleared by Courtney before returning to play.

5. Injury During Activities:

If an athlete sustains an injury or becomes ill during tryouts, practices, scrimmages, games, contests, meets, etc., they must promptly notify Courtney. Courtney will assess the injury or illness and guide the athlete on appropriate treatment and return-to-sport decisions. If the athlete sits out of a practice or a game, they must be cleared by Courtney before returning to play.

6. Minor Injury Clearance:

Any athlete who misses a practice, a scrimmage, or a game due to a minor injury (one

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that does not require a doctor's visit) must receive clearance from Courtney, before returning to play.

7. Concussion Protocol:

If an athlete is diagnosed with a concussion by their doctor:

a. The athlete must first be cleared by their doctor to begin the gradual 5-day concussion return-to-play protocol.

b. The athlete must complete the 5-day concussion protocol under the supervision of Courtney.

8. Senior Night:

Any senior athlete who is out of the season due to injury and wishes to participate in their senior night game must obtain permission from the doctor who originally removed them from sports. A clearance note from the doctor must be submitted to Courtney at least 2 business/school days before the game. For example, if the game is scheduled for 4 pm on a Tuesday, the clearance note should be turned in before 4 pm on the preceding Friday.

9. COVID Protocol:

Any athlete diagnosed with COVID needs to check in with Courtney, especially if they have had any symptoms. COVID can cause disturbances in breathing, heart rate, and overall fatigue and weakness. To ensure the health and safety of the athlete, they need to check in with Courtney when symptoms resolve. The CDC currently has no restrictions on returning to school/sports. The guidelines WHS uses are the same as for the flu: an athlete can return to school/sports if symptoms resolve after 24 hours, 24 hours since the last vomiting episode, 24 hours with no fever, and 24 hours without taking OTC medication for symptoms. The protocol is only two days unless other issues arise.

Contact Information:

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