

ATHLETIC CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT PROTOCOL

Purpose of the Protocol:

This protocol reviews the steps required by all involved parties for prevention and management of athletic concussions and head injuries. Specific responsibilities are listed below by role. All categories of people involved, including parents and students, are required to complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of athletic concussion, head injury and associated health risks. It is especially important to be aware of Second Impact Syndrome, a recognized condition that can be lethal and can occur when an individual sustains another head injury before he or she has had time to completely heal a previously sustained brain injury.

The Athletic Director has the additional responsibilities of ensuring that all recordkeeping is complete and that district statistics on concussions and head injuries are reported to the state. Coaches and/or certified athletic trainers must also complete Head Injury During Sports Season report forms, remove athletes who have suffered a concussion or head injury from practice or play, and communicate about the specific injury to the athlete's parents, the Athletic Director, and the school nurse. Schools nurses have the additional responsibilities to review forms and participate in developing a graduated reentry plan for athletes who have had a concussion. Parents must also submit a Head Injury Report form for any injury or concussion the student suffers outside of the extracurricular activity, participate in developing a graduated reentry plan, and submit a Medical Clearance form before their children can return to full activity.

This protocol will be reviewed at least every two years and revised as necessary. Should major developments in the recognition and management of head injuries occur, the School Committee Policy would also be reviewed and revised if indicated.

Definitions:

Sports means extracurricular athletic activities including, but not limited to, cheerleading, marching band, ultimate Frisbee, in addition to more traditional competitive sports.

Head injury is defined as a direct bump, blow or jolt to the head or a fall or body blow that causes the head or brain to move abruptly back and forth. Head injury includes the categories of concussion and traumatic brain injury. Scalp or facial laceration alone is not a head injury.

Concussion is defined as a disturbance in brain function resulting from head injury without structural injury to the brain. An individual does not need to lose consciousness in order to suffer a concussion. Consequences from a concussion can vary dramatically depending on the individual. Concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury.

Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) is defined as a complex disruption of brain function following a direct blow or jolt to the head, penetrating brain injury or a blow to the body with significant force transmitted to the head. A TBI can result in short- or long-term effects on independent functioning. TBI includes, but is not limited to, a concussion.

Second Impact Syndrome is a potentially lethal condition that can occur when an individual sustains another head injury before he or she has had time to completely heal a previously sustained brain injury. This condition can arise from disruption of blood flow to the brain.

Protocol:

Athletic Director

1. Complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of athletic concussion, head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome.
2. Ensure record keeping for annual concussion and head injury safety training for staff, parents, volunteers, coaches and students.
3. Ensure that all student athletes submit an annual physical examination prior to participation in extracurricular athletics.
4. Ensure that all student athletes submit a Pre-Participation form prior to each season.
5. Ensure that Report of Head Injury During Sports Season forms are used.
6. Annually report to Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) the number of Head Injury Forms collected and the number of students who incur head injuries and suspected concussions.

Coaches

1. Complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of athletic concussion, head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome.
2. Submit verification of completion of annual training to the Athletic Director.
3. Review Athletics Pre-Participation Concussion History and Screening Form to identify athletes at greater head injury risk.
4. Complete Report of Head Injury form for concussions and head injuries that occur during practice or competition and submit them to the school nurse.
5. Remove student athletes from play with concussions or head injuries that occur during practice or competition.
6. Communicate directly and in writing with parents of any student removed from play that occur during practice or competition.
7. Communicate with the Athletic Director and school nurse about any students removed from practice or competition for a head injury, suspected concussion, or loss of consciousness.

Certified Athletic Trainers

1. Complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of athletic head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome.
2. Submit verification of completion of annual training to the Athletic Director.
3. Review Athletics Pre-Participation Concussion History and Screening Form to identify athletes at greater head injury risk.
4. Review Report of Head Injury form for concussions or head injuries that occur during practice or competition and submit them to the school nurse.
5. Remove student athletes from play with head injuries or concussions that occur during practice or competition.
6. Participate in a graduated reentry plan for students diagnosed with a concussion.

School Nurses

1. Complete annual training in the prevention and recognition of athletic head injury, and associated health risks including second impact syndrome.
2. Submit verification of completion of annual training to the Athletic Director.
3. Review Athletics Pre-Participation Concussion History and Screening Forms for head injury history and follow up with parents.
4. Review Report of Head Injury forms and follow up with coaches and parents.
5. Maintain Pre-Participation forms and Report of Head injury forms in the school health record.

6. Participate in a graduated reentry plan for students diagnosed with a concussion.
7. Assist the Athletic Director in preparing an annual report to the MDPH.

Parents

1. Annually and for each extracurricular athletic activity, submit a signed Athletics Pre-Participation Concussion History and Screening Form that indicates completion of training regarding head injuries and concussions and up-to-date information about their child's concussion history especially any recent injuries suffered outside of extracurricular activities as well as head, face or cervical spine injury.
2. Submit a Head Injury Report Form for any head injury or concussion that occurs during the season outside of the extracurricular activity.
3. For any student diagnosed with a concussion, participate in developing a written, graduated reentry plan for return to full academic and extracurricular activities.
4. For any student removed from play due to a head injury, suspected concussion or loss of consciousness during practice or competition, submit a Medical Clearance Form to the school nurse before returning to play.

Student Athletes

1. Annually and for each extracurricular athletic activity, submit a signed Athletics Pre- Participation Concussion History and Screening Form that indicates completion of training regarding head injuries and concussions and up-to-date information relative to concussion history, head, face or cervical spine injury and co-existent concussive injuries.