

# CONCUSSION RECOGNITION TOOL

To help identify concussion in children, adolescents and adults

## RECOGNISE & REMOVE

Head impacts can be associated with serious and potentially fatal brain injuries. This Concussion Recognition Tool (CRT) is to be used for the identification of suspected concussion. It is not designed to diagnose concussion.

## STEP 1: RED FLAGS – CALL AN AMBULANCE

If there is concern after an injury including whether ANY of the following signs are observed or complaints are reported then the player should be safely and immediately removed from the activity. If no licensed healthcare professional is available, call an ambulance for urgent medical assessment:

- Neck pain or tenderness
- Severe or increasing headache
- Deteriorating conscious state
- Double vision
- Seizure or convulsion
- Vomiting
- Weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs
- Loss of consciousness
- Increasingly restless, agitated or combative

### REMEMBER

- In all cases, the basic principles of first aid (danger, response, airways, breathing, circulation) should be followed.
- Do not attempt to move the player (other than required for airway support) unless trained to do so.
- Assessment for a spinal cord injury is critical
- Do not remove a helmet or any other equipment unless trained to do so safely.

If there are no Red Flags, identification of possible concussion should proceed to the following steps:

## STEP 2: OBSERVABLE SIGNS

Visual clues that suggest possible concussion include:

- Lying motionless on the playing field
- Disorientation or confusion, or an inability to respond appropriately to questions
- Balance, gait difficulties, motor incoordination, stumbling, slow laboured movements
- Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- Blank or vacant look
- Facial injury after head trauma

## STEP 3: SYMPTOMS

- Headache
- Blurred vision
- More emotional
- Difficulty concentrating
- "Pressure in head"
- Sensitivity to light
- More irritable
- Difficulty remembering
- Balance problems
- Sensitivity to light
- Sadness
- Feeling slowed down
- Nausea or vomiting
- Fatigue or low energy
- Nervous or anxious
- Feeling like (in a fog)
- Drowsiness
- "don't feel right"
- Neck pain
- Dizziness

## STEP 4: MEMORY ASSESSMENT

(IN ATHLETES OLDER THAN 12 YEARS)

**Failure to answer any of these questions (modified appropriately for each sport) correctly may suggest a concussion.**

- What venue are we at today?
- What competition did you enter last week/time?
- Which competition are you at now?
- What was your result at your last competition?

**Athletes with suspected concussion should:**

- Not be left alone initially**
- Not drink alcohol**
- Not use recreational / prescription drugs**
- Not be sent home by themselves. They need to be with a responsible adult.**
- Not drive a motor vehicle until cleared to do so by a healthcare professional.**

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