



## Fall Wellness Newsletter

This publication is brought to you by the Wellness Committee, which is dedicated to educating Rush-Henrietta families about important topics to keep your children healthy.

### **Concussions 101: A parent guide for concussions and their management.**

#### **Q: What is a concussion?**

A: A concussion is a mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI). This injury can be caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head. Concussions can also occur from a fall or an impact to the body that causes the brain to move quickly back and forth or side to side inside the skull. This force causes the neurons in the brain to stop sending and receiving signals as they normally do.

#### **Q: What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?**

A: A concussion can result in a variety of physical, cognitive, emotional, and sleep related symptoms.

##### Physical symptoms:

- Headache
- Nausea and/or vomiting
- Noise and/or light sensitivity
- Blurred vision
- Balance or coordination problems
- Fatigue

##### Cognitive Symptoms:

- Feeling of foginess; as if moving in slowed motion
- Confusion and/or poor ability to concentrate
- Difficulty remembering past information or retaining new information
- Sleepiness

##### Emotional Symptoms:

- Moodiness
- Sadness
- Nervousness
- Anxiety

##### Sleep Problems:

- Sleeping more, or sleeping less; or problems falling asleep

Symptoms of a concussion may not fully appear for several days following an injury so close monitoring and assessment is very important. A concussion can last for days, weeks, months or even longer. Young children and teenagers may have a slower recovery due to the immaturity of their brain.

#### **Q: If my child did not lose consciousness, does it mean the concussion is not as bad?**

A: No, a loss of consciousness typically only occurs in about 10% of all concussions and does not seem to correlate with the severity of the concussion.

#### **Q: What should I do if I think my child may have a concussion?**

A: It is important to immediately call your health care provider. If you do not have one, your child should be taken to the hospital and thoroughly examined. If your child has been diagnosed with a concussion, it is very important to inform the School Nurse Teacher. She will notify the classroom and physical education teachers.

**Q: Is there anything that I can do to help my child heal from a concussion?**

A: Yes, physical and cognitive rest is necessary at both home and school immediately following the diagnosis of a concussion. This is imperative for the brain to begin to heal and to help minimize the severity of the concussion, as well as improve the outcome and recovery time.

Home Accommodations:

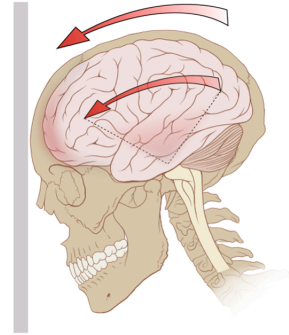
- No exercising or physical exertion
- Limit screen time, minimal television
- No texting
- No computer
- No video games
- No loud music
- No alcohol

School Accommodations:

- No physical education classes
- Excused absence from school or modify to half day
- Scheduled rest breaks during the day at nurse's office
- Avoid loud lunchroom

Classroom Accommodations:

- Limiting time in classroom, leave early to avoid passing time
- Obtain copy of notes
- Change seating to front of room



Close monitoring and reassessment is necessary to adjust accommodations accordingly to ensure that the student is improving. During the initial concussion management period, “less is more.” Having the student return in a gradual fashion, according to how much they can tolerate, will overall improve their outcome.

**Q: Are there any complications or long-term problems that can occur from a concussion?**

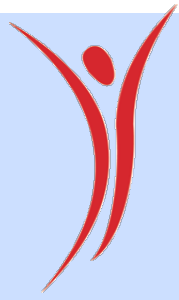
A: Yes, Post Concussive Syndrome and Second Impact Syndrome are serious complications and catastrophic events that can occur. Post Concussive Syndrome is when symptoms persist for longer than three months. Second Impact Syndrome is a very rare event observed in those who return to play still with symptoms and sustain a second head injury before the first one has healed. Within seconds to several minutes of the second hit, the child may collapse to the ground. This can be fatal approximately 50% of the time.

**Q: When can my child return to physical education class?**

A: Your child will need to be medically cleared by your health care provider for them to return to class. At a minimum, your child will miss at least one week of physical education class to ensure that enough time has allowed for them to heal. Our School Nurse Teacher will assess your child before and immediately following their initial return to class to make sure no symptoms have returned.

**Q: What if my child participates in extracurricular sports?**

A: Removal from physical participation is crucial in preventing long-term problems and catastrophic events. It is for these reasons that we take extra precautions to make sure that a student athlete is completely recovered from their concussion prior to returning to sports. Currently, a Concussion Management Team is being developed by our Athletic Director to help ensure the safety of all of our players. This collaborative approach will be implemented as soon as a player is suspected of having a concussion. The use of computer-based neurocognitive testing will assist the team to help ensure that a student has recovered from the concussion. The Athletic Trainer, Nurse Practitioner and School Physician Consultant work together on a case-by-case basis to ensure player safety. Only when the student has been medically cleared from both their health care provider and our Concussion Management Team will the “Return to Play” protocol be initiated. Please visit the athletics page website for more information.

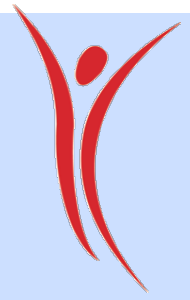


Mark your calendar, save the date...

District Wellness and Health Fair

Thursday, March 8, 2012

5-7:30 p.m. at the Dome Arena



Below are some links that may be helpful:

CDC link:

<http://www2c.cdc.gov/ecards/index.asp?category=223>

Local Medical resource link:

<http://www.urmc.rochester.edu/news/story/index.cfm?id=3343>

ImPACT NeuroCognitive Testing link:

<http://impacttest.com/>

Concussion Legislation link:

[http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled\\_in\\_sports/2011/09/ny\\_gov\\_cuomo\\_signs\\_youth\\_concussion\\_law.html](http://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/schooled_in_sports/2011/09/ny_gov_cuomo_signs_youth_concussion_law.html)

Concussion App link:

<http://itunes.apple.com/us/app/concussion-recognition-response/id436009132?mt=8>

Concussion Research link:

<http://www.princeton.edu/main/news/archive/S31/80/06C59/index.xml?section=featured>

R-H website Wellness Corner link:

<http://www.rhnet.org/district.cfm?subpage=31393>