

SPORTS-RELATED CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or body. Allowing a student to return to physical and academic activities before recovering from a concussion increases the chance of a more serious brain injury that can result in severe disability and/or death.

A student who sustains or is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury during school or at a school activity, shall be immediately escorted to the office of the school nurse. Such a student may not return to play or school until he or she obtains medical clearance.

Required Concussion Protocol

- A. A student who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or other head injury during sports competition or practice, gym class, or other physical activity shall be immediately removed from play and may not return to play that day.
- B. Possible signs of a concussion or other head injury that could be observed by a coach, the school nurse, or the school or team physician may include a student who:
 - 1. Appears dazed, stunned, or disoriented;
 - 2. Forgets plays, or demonstrates short term memory difficulty;
 - 3. Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination;
 - 4. Answers questions slowly or inaccurately;
 - 5. Loses consciousness.
- C. Possible symptoms of a concussion or other head injury that could be reported by the student to a coach, the school nurse, the school or team physician, or parents/guardians may include:
 - 1. Headache;
 - 2. Nausea/vomiting;
 - 3. Balance problems or dizziness;
 - 4. Double vision or changes in vision;
 - 5. Sensitivity to light or sound/noise;
 - 6. Feeling sluggish or foggy;
 - 7. Difficulty with concentration and short term memory;
 - 8. Sleep disturbance.
- D. To return to academic and/or physical school activities the student must follow the protocol:
 - 1. Immediate removal from the activity;
 - 2. The school nurse should make contact with the student's parents/guardians and inform them of the suspected concussion or other head injury;
 - 3. The school nurse shall provide the student with approved information and/or a medical checklist to provide to their parents/guardians, physician, or other licensed healthcare professional;
 - 4. The student must receive written clearance from his or her physician that the student is asymptomatic and may begin physical activities and/or return to school;
 - 5. The school nurse may consult with the school physician after medical clearance is given by the student's physician.

SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY (continued)Temporary Accommodations for Students With Head Injuries

- A. Consideration of the cognitive effects of returning to the classroom is an important part of the treatment of concussions and other head injuries.
- B. Mental exertion increases the symptoms of concussions and other head injuries, and also affects recovery.
- C. Cognitive rest is as important to recovery as physical rest. Reading, studying, testing, texting, or even watching movies if a student is sensitive to light can slow down his or her recovery.
- D. In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention toolkit on managing concussions, the board may also address the student's cognitive needs during recovery. Students who return to school after a concussion or other head injury may need to:
1. Take rest breaks as needed, including from physical education;
 2. Spend fewer hours at school;
 3. Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments;
 4. Receive help with schoolwork;
 5. Reduce time spent on the computer, reading, and writing;
 6. Be granted early dismissal from classes to avoid crowded hallways.

Policy Review

This policy shall be reviewed regularly and updated as necessary to ensure that it reflects the most current information available on the prevention, risk, and treatment of concussions and other head injuries.

Adopted: August 18, 2012
 NJSBA Review/Update: December 2015
 Readopted:

Key Words

Concussion, Head Injury, Sports, Athletics,

<u>Legal References:</u>	<p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:16-6, -6.1 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:35-4.6 <u>et seq.</u> <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-1</p> <p><u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-3 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-5 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-6 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-7, -8, -10, -11 <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-23 <u>et seq.</u> <u>N.J.S.A.</u> 18A:40-41.4</p> <p><u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-1.1 <u>et seq.</u> <u>See particularly:</u> <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:16-1.1, -1.3, -2.1, -2.3, -2.4 <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:26-12.1 <u>et seq.</u> <u>See particularly:</u> <u>N.J.A.C.</u> 6A:26-12.3</p> <p><u>Plainfield Board of Education v. Cooperman</u>, 105 NJ 587 (1987)</p>	<p>Indemnity of officers and employees against civil actions <u>Parents Right to Conscience Act of 1979</u> Employment of medical inspectors, optometrists and nurses; salaries; terms; rules Lectures to teachers Method of examination; notice to parent or guardian In general</p> <p>Exclusion of students who are ill Nursing services for nonpublic school students Removal of student athlete or cheerleader from competition, practice; return Programs to support student development</p> <p>Operation and maintenance of school facilities</p>
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SPORTS RELATED CONCUSSION AND HEAD INJURY (continued)**Possible**

<u>Cross References:</u>	*1410	Local units
	1420	County and intermediate units
	*3510	Operation and maintenance of plant
	*3516	Safety
	*4131/4131.1	Staff development; in-service education/visitations/conferences
	4151.2/4251.2	Family illness/quarantine
	*5125	Student records
	*5141	Health
	*5141.1	Accidents
	*5141.2	Illness
	*5141.3	Health examinations and immunizations
	*5141.21	Administering medication
	*5142	Student safety
	*5200	Nonpublic school students
	*6142.4	Physical education and health

*Indicates policy is included in the Critical Policy Reference Manual.