



Concussion Signs and Symptoms

Please Note: If any one or more sign(s) and/or symptom(s) are present, a concussion should be suspected but the full check should be completed (including the Quick Memory Function Check) to provide comprehensive information to parent/guardian and medical doctor/nurse practitioner.

Red Flag Sign(s) and Symptom(s)

- deteriorating conscious state;
- double vision;
- increasingly restless, agitated or combative;
- loss of consciousness;
- neck pain or tenderness;
- seizure or convulsion;
- severe or increasing headache;
- vomiting; and
- weakness or tingling/burning in arms or legs.

Other Concussion Signs

- balance, gait difficulties, motor incoordination, stumbling, slow laboured movements;
- blank or vacant look;
- disorientation or confusion, or an inability to respond appropriately to questions;
- facial injury after head trauma;
- lying motionless on the playing surface (no loss of consciousness); and
- slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head.

Other Concussion Symptoms

- “don’t feel right”;
- “pressure in head”;
- balance problems;
- blurred vision;
- difficulty concentrating;
- difficulty remembering;
- dizziness;
- drowsiness;
- fatigue or low energy;
- feeling like “in a fog”;
- feeling slowed down;
- headache;
- more emotional;
- more irritable;
- nausea;
- nervous or anxious;
- sadness;
- sensitivity to light; and
- sensitivity to noise.

Red Flag Procedure

- call 911;
- if there has been any loss of consciousness, assume there is a possible neck injury and do not move the student;
- stay with the student until emergency medical services arrive;
- contact the student's parents/guardians (or emergency contact) to inform them of the incident and that emergency medical services have been contacted;
- monitor and document any changes (that is, physical, cognitive, emotional/behavioural) in the student;
- consult your school board's injury report form for documentation procedures;
- if the student has lost consciousness and regains consciousness, encourage them to remain calm and to lie still; and
- do not administer medication (unless the student requires medication for other conditions, for example, insulin for a student with diabetes, inhaler for asthma).

Reference: OPHEA 2020 | Ontario Physical Activity Safety Standards in Education