

Lovelady ISD Concussion Management Plan

BACKGROUND

The Lovelady ISD Concussion Management Program has developed and implemented the following concussion management guidelines for the student athletes in Lovelady ISD. These comprehensive guidelines are consistent with current standards of care and appropriate medical practices for the student athlete whom suffers a concussion in sports. Developed and implemented by the Concussion Oversight Team (COT) listed below, the following guidelines are designed to facilitate a safe return to athletic activities for the student athletes of Lovelady ISD. The COT is committed to utilizing current standards and methods in its multidisciplinary approach to concussion management include: pre and post injury neurocognitive testing, symptoms assessment tool, and a progressive return to play protocol.

LOVELADY ISD CONCUSSION OVERSIGHT TEAM

Athletic Director- Role is to support coaches, student athletes, by providing training and promoting a culture of awareness. The AD will ensure the coaches teach safe techniques, receive updated training, advocate for proper and well maintained equipment, monitor appropriate incident protocol, promote good officiating, and track injuries.

School Administrator- (Superintendent, Principal, Assistant Principal, & Dean of Students) The role of the administrator is to serve as the school representative in the event an incident occurs. They are responsible for make decisions that may involve school resources as well as putting systems in place to provide the support necessary to return students to full academic and physical activity as quickly and safely as possible.

School Nurse- The role of the nurse is to work with the coaches, parents, school staff, and the student's medical provider to implement all medical recommendations on proper ongoing care while at school and monitor when necessary.

Counselor- To inform teachers of learning adjustments while a student is symptomatic and in some instances may assist with the ongoing assessment necessary to move forward with long-term needs for 504 plans.

Athletic Trainer- Serves as the medical expert on site to evaluate and recommend for further medical treatment when necessary or provide direct care to the athlete onsite. The trainer works in cooperation with the coaching staff, health care professionals, and parents manage injuries effectively.

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is defined as a complex pathophysiological process affecting the brain, induced by traumatic biomechanical forces. A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury, or TBI, caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head that can change the way your brain normally works. Concussions can also occur from a blow to the body that causes the head to move rapidly back and forth. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung," or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

Signs and symptoms of a concussion are typically noticed immediately after the injury; however some might not be recognized until days after the injury. Common symptoms include: headache, dizziness, amnesia, fatigue, confusion, mood changes, depression, poor vision, sensitivity to light or noise, lethargy, poor attention or concentration, sleep disturbances, and aggression. The individual may or may not have lost consciousness.

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF A CONCUSSION IS SUSPECTED?

Students who may have suffered a concussion should be removed from the athletic practice or game immediately. The student should be evaluated by the athletic trainer or medical professional onsite. Students suspected of a concussion should not be allowed to return to play until appropriate medical clearance and return to play guidelines have been followed. The permission for return to play will come from appropriate health care professionals. You should also inform your child's coach, athletic trainer, and/or school administrator, if you think that your child/player may have a concussion. When in doubt, the athlete sits out.

WHAT IF MY CHILD KEEPS PLAYING WITH A CONCUSSION?

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of a concussion should be removed from play immediately. Continuing to play with the signs and symptoms of a concussion leaves the young athlete especially vulnerable to greater injury. There is an increased risk of significant damage from a concussion for a period of time after that concussion occurs, particularly if the athlete suffers another concussion before completely recovering from the first one. This can lead to prolonged recovery, or even to severe brain swelling (second impact syndrome) with devastating and even fatal consequences. It is well known that adolescent or teenage athletes will often under report symptoms of injuries and concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and students is the key for student-athlete's safety.

CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT

The cornerstone of concussion management is physical and cognitive rest until symptoms resolve and then a graded exertional protocol prior to medical clearance and return to play. During this period of recovery, while still symptomatic, it is important to emphasize to the athlete that physical AND cognitive rest is required. Activities that require concentration and attention (e.g., scholastic work, videogames, text messaging, etc.) may exacerbate symptoms and possibly delay recovery. In such cases, the Coaching Staff will work in conjunction with the athlete, teachers, and parents to ensure appropriate accommodations according to physician recommendations.

In the event a student athlete is suspected of a concussion the student will be:

1. Removed from athletic participation immediately.
2. Evaluated by a Licensed Physician
3. Administered Post-Concussion test and balance assessment.
4. Progressed through return to play protocol under the direction of a Licensed Physician.
5. Released to participation with written clearance from a Physician

GRADUATED RETURN TO PLAY PROTOCOL

Return to play protocol following a concussion follows a graduated process progressing from rest to full-contact training. This progression has been developed and is managed by the Lovelady ISD coaches under the supervision of its Concussion Oversight Team. With this progression, the athlete should continue to proceed to the next level if asymptomatic at rest and with provocative exercise. If any post-concussion symptoms occur while in the return to play program, the athlete will wait 24 hours after the symptoms subside and then start the progression again at the beginning.