

SPORTS CONCUSSION MANAGEMENT GUIDELINES FOR YOUTH ATHLETES

Brookline Recreation

Purpose: Use of these guidelines is intended to minimize the effects of sports concussion injuries for youth athletes participating in organized sports in Brookline. A comprehensive approach will be used. This involves education of athletes, coaches, parents, volunteers, recreation staff, and the supervision and management of an injured athlete during a concussion recovery period by a trained physician. Information regarding concussion education, baseline neurological testing, and return to participation are also included.

Guidelines:

1. All youth sports shall certify that coaches and all other youth sports volunteers have completed an approved online concussion course (NFHS or CDC) prior to receiving permits for facility use each season. Certification is good for 2 years. Courses will include information about the expected frequency of concussions in sports, typical symptoms, the role of computerized neuropsychological testing and formal sideline assessment, and the risks of sports participation before recovery is complete.
2. All youth sports organizations will verify that they have supplied all participants and parent/guardians of participants with information about baseline computerized neuropsychological testing (ImPACT) prior to the start of contact activity in their sport. Although not mandatory, baseline screening shall be made available to all youth sports participants aged 11 and over by the Brookline Recreation Department.
3. Any participant who suffers head injury with loss of consciousness during a practice or game activity shall be evacuated using Emergency Medical System for immediate evaluation at a local Hospital Emergency Department and parents immediately notified if they are not present at the time. Other suspected concussion injuries may also be evacuated or referred to parent for transportation to receive appropriate medical attention dependent upon sideline evaluation.
4. Any athlete who has sustained a concussion or is suspected by a coach of having concussion symptoms either through sideline assessment or by later report from an athlete, coach, volunteer, or parent, will be immediately removed from the practice or contest and will be continually monitored by a designated adult until they have left the venue with a parent or other responsible adult to supervise him/her.

5. Coaches must send any athlete suspected of sustaining a concussion (whether it is incurred during sports or otherwise) to their parent/guardian for referral to a physician for assessment. If the athlete's parents are not present at the venue at the time of injury or present to escort the athlete from the venue, a coach will contact a parent the same day as soon as possible to inform them of the concern about a possible concussion. The coach will remind the parent about Brookline Recreation's policy that athletes suspected of being concussed may not return to play in practices or contests until at least 24 hours have passed and the athlete has received medical clearance from a physician. Parents will also be directed to this policy and other general information about concussion safety at www.brooklinerec.com.
6. The injured athlete and his/her parent will be advised that until the athlete is medically evaluated s/he should avoid physical exertion and will not be allowed to participate in any organized team sports activities involving exertion (other than flexibility) or physical contact while any concussion symptoms persist, and for at least a 24-hour period following suspected injury.
7. Once an athlete has been cleared to return to sports participation by the treating physician, the parent will notify the coach and provide a written letter to that effect from the treating physician.
8. The Recreation Department will be informed by the coaches or youth sports board of each suspected concussion in Brookline Recreation activities and of any cases involving departure from above-listed guidelines.

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