

Sport-Related Concussion (SRC)

Symptoms

■ Not every athlete experiences all the symptoms and not every athlete experiencing these symptoms has a concussion (not all possible symptoms are listed):

- Most common is headache and dizziness
- Loss of consciousness (does not have to occur)
- Nausea or vomiting
- Vision changes
- Feeling “out of it”
- Difficulty concentrating
- Tinnitus
- Drowsiness
- Imbalance
- Disorientation

■ More than 1/3 of athletes do not recognize symptoms of a concussion.

■ The most common reason for athletes failing to report a concussion is feeling the injury is not serious enough to report.

■ A simple concussion may resolve in 7-10 days.

■ A complex concussion: may have persistent symptoms, sustained multiple concussions, convulsions, loss of consciousness (greater than 1 minute), or prolonged difficulty with thought processes.



See a Doctor

- For any of the above listed symptoms following a blow during sports activity.
- Before returning to play.

Risk Factors

- Participation in contact sports (i.e., football, soccer, etc.).
- Contact with another person or object when unexpected.
- Previous Sports-Related Concussion.

Tests and Diagnosis

- Side line assessment at the time of the incident.
- Thorough neurological examination (orientation, recent memory, ability to perform simple tasks, postural stability).
- Neuropsychological testing may be suggested.
- Sports-Related Concussions are classified as simple or complex based on longevity of symptoms.

Treatment

- Rest plays a big part in the recovery (this includes resting the brain “cognitive rest”).
- Return to play should be gradual and stepwise.
- Reassessment of neurological status to determine when to return-to-play.

Prevention

- Prevention is difficult for athletes, especially those playing contact sports.
- Use of helmets has been found to have limited effect, but should still be worn during sports requiring them for other safety measures.
- Being aware of surroundings at all times to avoid unintended contact with solid surfaces (goal posts, etc) and being prepared for the imminent contact of another player.
- Waiting to return-to-play when all symptoms have resolved.

Meehan, W. P., and Gachur, R. G. (2009) “Sport-Related Concussion”. Pediatrics (American Academy of Pediatrics), 123; 114-123.