



**Wilson School District
Concussion Management Program**

Background:

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury (TBI) caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head or body. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that as many as 3.8 million sports and recreation related concussions occur in the United States each year. In mid-November of 2011, Pennsylvania Governor Tom Corbett signed the Act of Nov. 9, 2011, P.L. 411, No.101, known as the Safety in Youth Sports Act, into law. This law makes certain requirements of Pennsylvania schools and the personnel who supervise the student athletes who represent these schools, as well as the medical personnel who support them when there is an injury.

Pre-Season Preparation:

Coach Education

Once each school year, all Wilson School District coaches shall complete the concussion management certification training course offered by the Pennsylvania Athletic Trainers Society and ConcussionWise. This course can be found on the Wilson Website under Athletics and then Sports Medicine. On the Sports Medicine homepage, click on the ConcussionWise icon and then proceed with the coach instructions. A coach shall not coach an athletic activity until he/she completes the required training course.

Any coach who violates this policy will be suspended from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of that season. For a second violation the coach will be suspended from coaching any athletic activity for the remainder of that season and for the next season. For a third violation, the coach will be permanently suspended from coaching any athletic activity.

Parent / Athlete Education

The Wilson Sports Medicine staff will hold an informational meeting, prior to the start of each athletic season, for all competitors competing in a contact sport, regarding concussion management and how pre-season baseline assessments can aid in the evaluation, management and recovery process. Non contact sports participants will be provided with the NFHS Suggested Guidelines For Management of Concussion in Sports handout.

Contact sports include: Football, Field Hockey, Boys and Girls Soccer, Ice Hockey, Boys and Girls Volleyball, Boys and Girls Water Polo, Baseball, Softball, Boys and Girls Lacrosse and Wrestling.

PIAA Comprehensive Initial Pre-Participatory Physical Exam Form

To compete in athletics at Wilson, an athlete must submit a completed physical exam form prior to participation. Section 3: Understanding of Risk of Concussion and Traumatic Brain Injury, of the PIAA CIPPE physical form must be signed by both the parent and the athlete prior to participation. Athletes who do not use the PIAA CIPPE form for their physical must receive a copy of Section 3 of the PIAA CIPPE physical form to be signed by both the parent and the athlete prior to participation.

Baseline Testing

All Wilson School District athletes will have access to pre-season baseline concussion testing. All participants in contact sports at Wilson will automatically receive a baseline concussion test. The Wilson Sports Medicine staff utilizes the SAC, Standard Assessment of Concussion, baseline testing tool. The Wilson Sports Medicine staff also has access to the ImPact concussion testing tool. If a parent would like their athlete to receive an Impact baseline test, they may make an appointment with a member of the Wilson Sports Medicine staff to schedule testing.

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Concussion Management

The Wilson School District has granted authority to all School or Team Physicians and all Licensed Athletic Trainers, to determine that a student athlete exhibits signs or symptoms of a concussion during an athletic contest or practice. All of these individuals have been trained in the evaluation and management of concussion.

If the School or Team Physician or Licensed Athletic Trainer is not present at an athletic event or practice, the coach must immediately remove an athlete from play who is exhibiting any of the signs or symptoms of a sports related concussion. **The coach must inform one of the Wilson School District Licensed Athletic Trainers about the injured athlete so appropriate concussion evaluation can take place.**

Once the Wilson School or Team Physician or any of the Wilson Licensed Athletic Trainers has determined that a Wilson student athlete is exhibiting any of the signs or symptoms of a sports related concussion or other head injury during practice or competition, that student athlete shall be immediately removed from play for the day and may not return to play until he/she is evaluated and cleared for return to participation in writing by an MD / DO or a Neuropsychologist.

If a Wilson School District athlete is removed from play to be evaluated for possible concussion signs or symptoms and the Wilson School or Team Physician or a Wilson Licensed Athletic Trainer determines that concussion signs or symptoms are not present, the athlete may be returned to play the same day.

Signs of Concussion:

(Could be observed by Coaches, Athletic Trainer, School/Team Physician, School Nurse, Parent / Guardian)

The signs of a concussion include:

1. Appears dazed, stunned, or disoriented, demonstrates decreased alertness
2. Forgets plays, or demonstrates short term memory difficulty
3. Slurs words
4. Exhibits difficulties with balance or coordination.
5. Answers questions slowly or inaccurately.
6. Exhibits seizures or vomiting
7. Changes in level of consciousness. (Estimates are that <10% of concussions result in the loss of consciousness)

Symptoms of Concussion

(Reported by the student athlete to Coaches, Athletic Trainer, School/ Team Physician, School Nurse, Parent/ Guardian)

The symptoms of a concussion include:

1. Headache
2. Nausea
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

9. Irritability or changes in personality and behavior

Once a student athlete has been removed from competition or practices because of signs or symptoms of a concussion, the following Concussion Management Protocol must be followed:

1. Emergency medical treatment should be pursued if there is a deterioration of symptoms including seizure, altered level of consciousness, vomiting, altered pupillary findings, or direct neck pain associated with the injury.
2. All appropriate school officials should be notified of the event, including the school Principal, Licensed Athletic Trainer, Athletic Director, school nurse, school counselor and all of the student's teachers.
3. School officials must make contact with the student athlete's parent/guardian and inform him/her of the suspected sports-related concussion or head injury.
4. School officials shall provide the student athlete and their parent or guardian with information on the continuing care of a person with concussion.. This material is available through the Pennsylvania Departments of Health or Education, or the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov).
5. The student athlete must be evaluated by an MD / DO or Neuropsychologist who is trained in the evaluation and management of concussions.
6. The student athlete must receive written clearance from an MD / DO or Neuropsychologist trained in the evaluation and management of concussions that states that the student athlete is asymptomatic at rest and may begin a graduated return-to-play protocol.

Return- to- Play Protocol

After written medical clearance is given by an MD / DO or Neuropsychologist, the student athlete may begin a graduated individualized return-to-play protocol supervised by a Wilson Licensed Athletic Trainer.

If an MD / DO or Neuropsychologist clears a concussed athlete for return to play prior to the completion of the 5 Day Return-To-Play protocol, the concussed athlete must complete the 5 Day Return-To-Play protocol.

The Wilson Sports Medicine staff uses the following graduated return to play protocol:

Day 1: Light aerobic exercise- 5 to 10 minute light jog; no weight lifting, resistance training, or any other exercises.

Day 2: Moderate aerobic exercise- 15 to 20 minutes of running at moderate intensity followed by calisthenics and sports specific change of direction grids.

Day 3: Moderate aerobic exercise- 15 to 20 minutes including sprinting exercises followed by sports specific change of direction grids and functional testing.

Day 4: Non-contact training drills in full uniform. May begin weight lifting, resistance training, and other exercises.

Day 5: Full return to activity if asymptomatic following functional testing.

The athlete will be neurologically evaluated and will repeat the SAC, Standard Assessment of Concussion, test to compare to the baseline results following each day of the return-to-play protocol.

If concussion symptoms recur during the graduated return-to-play protocol, the student athlete will return, at a minimum, to the previous level of activity that caused no symptoms, and the attending physician should be notified.

Return to Classroom:

Temporary learning support accommodations may be needed for student athletes with Sports-Related Head Injuries to return to the classroom.

Rest is the best “medicine” for healing concussions or other head injuries. The concussed brain is affected in many functional aspects as a result of the injury. Memory, attention span, concentration and speed of processing significantly impact learning. Further, exposing the concussed student athlete to the stimulating school environment may exacerbate symptoms and delay the resolution of symptoms needed for recovery. Accordingly, consideration of the cognitive effects in returning to the classroom is also an important part of the treatment of sports-related concussions and head injuries.

Students who return to school after a concussion may need to:

1. Take rest breaks as needed
2. Spend fewer hours at school (have a shortened school day)
3. Be given more time to take tests or complete assignments. (All courses should be considered)
4. Receive help with schoolwork (pre-teaching, outlines, note taker, etc).
5. Reduce time spent on the computer, reading, and writing.
6. Be granted early dismissal from each class to avoid crowded hallways.
7. No standardized testing (PSSA, SAT, etc.) during the initial recovery window of 2-4 weeks.

In Pennsylvania, BrainSTEPS teams are available to virtually any secondary school in the Commonwealth. These teams have been developed by the Brain Injury Association of Pennsylvania with funding from the Pennsylvania Department of Health and the Department of Education.

BrainSTEPS teams are designed to support the staff, student, parents or guardians in a return to school plan after a brain injury. These teams work with all parties to identify and implement appropriate accommodations and modifications to manage the student’s symptoms and to support their learning needs throughout their secondary school career.

The school (teachers, school counselors, school nurse, etc.) and family should monitor the performance of the student closely for 2 weeks after the return to school. If the return to the classroom causes concussion symptoms to re-occur or if the student demonstrates uncharacteristic performance (reduced attention span, inability to take tests, acting out in class, etc.), the school will contact the parents about a formal referral to the local BrainSTEPS team (www.brainsteps.net). **The parents of the injured athlete will be responsible for any cost associated with this program.**