

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

HEADS UP: Concussion in High School Sports

The Iowa Legislature passed a new law, effective July 1, 2011, regarding students in grades 7 – 12 who participate in extracurricular interscholastic activities. Please note this important information from Iowa Code Section 280.13C, Brain Injury Policies:

- (1) A child must be immediately removed from participation (practice or competition) if his/her coach or a contest official observes signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury in an extracurricular interscholastic activity.
- (2) A child may not participate again until a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and other brain injuries has evaluated him/her and the student has received written clearance from that person to return to participation.
- (3) Key definitions:
 - “**Licensed health care provider**” means a physician, physician assistant, chiropractor, advanced registered nurse practitioner, nurse, physical therapist, or athletic trainer licensed by a board.
 - “**Extracurricular interscholastic activity**” means any extracurricular interscholastic activity, contest, or practice, including sports, dance, or cheerleading.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Even a “ding,” “getting your bell rung,” or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious.

What parents/guardians should do if they think their child has a concussion?

1. **OBEY THE NEW LAW.**
 - a. Keep your child out of participation until s/he is cleared to return by a licensed healthcare provider.
 - b. Seek medical attention right away.
2. Teach your child that it's not smart to play with a concussion.
3. Tell all of your child's coaches and the student's school nurse about ANY concussion.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You cannot see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If your teen reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

STUDENTS:

If you think you have a concussion:

- **Tell your coaches & parents** – Never ignore a bump or blow to the head, even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if you think one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- **Get a medical check-up** – A physician or other licensed health care provider can tell you if you have a concussion, and when it is OK to return to play.
- **Give yourself time to heal** – If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. It is important to rest and not return to play until you get the OK from your health care professional.

IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE CONTEST THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

IMPORTANT: Students participating in interscholastic athletics, cheerleading and dance; and their parents/guardians; must sign the acknowledgement below and return it to their school. Students cannot practice or compete in those activities until this form is signed and returned.

We have received the information provided on the concussion fact sheet titled, “HEADS UP: Concussion in High School Sports.”

Signs Reported by Students:

- Headache or “pressure” in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not “feeling right” or is “feeling down”

PARENTS:

How can you help your child prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Ensure that they follow their coaches' rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Information on concussions provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

Student's School

This contract applies to all student-athletes of interscholastic age involved in athletics. Athletic competition of interscholastic age student-athletes should be fun and should also be a significant part of a sound educational program, embodying high standards of ethics and sportsmanship and six core ethical values: trustworthiness, respect, responsibility, fairness, caring, and good citizenship (the "Six Pillars of Character"). The highest potential of sports is achieved when learning from the T.E.A.M. concept (Teaching, Enforcing, Advocating, and Modeling these values) and by committing to the ideal of pursuing victory with honor.

As a student athlete, I understand my responsibilities for participating in West High School athletic programs. I also understand there will be consequences for violating any of the expectations outlined in this contract.

As a student-athlete, I, _____ pledge to:

- Review, understand, and agree to abide by the District Eligibility Policy, 510.1-R (including academic eligibility) and the District Conduct Code Policy, 504.3-R
- Commit to my sport schedule by attending all practices and competitions and communicating my schedule to my employer, teachers, and parents. (If there are conflicts, I will communicate those with my coach immediately)
- Commit to my team by striving to contribute to the program, follow the training rules, and exercising sportsmanship at all times

Signature of Student-Athlete

Date

As a parent/guardian, I _____ pledge to:

- Review, understand, and agree to help my student-athlete abide by the District Eligibility Policy, 510.1-R (including academic eligibility) and the District Conduct Code Policy, 504.3-R
- Commit to my student-athlete's practice and competition schedule to minimize conflicts between family schedules and the athletic schedules and ensure that my student-athlete attends all practices, competitions, and special events
- Support my student-athlete by attending team meetings, competitions, and special events as much as my schedule will allow
- Discuss issues of concern with my athlete and the coach before they become a problem
- Respect the coach and understand that it is his/her responsibility to determine strategy and player selection (any questions or concerns should be directed to the coach in a private meeting)
- Work cooperatively with coaches, other parents, and school personnel to ensure a wholesome and successful athletic program for the school
- Encourage and model good sportsmanship by demonstrating positive support for all players, coaches, and officials at every practice, competition, or special event

Signature of Parent/Guardian

Date