

# VANCOUVER SWIM CLUB

## Concussion Information Sheet

A concussion is a brain injury and all brain injuries are serious. They are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head, or by a blow to another part of the body with the force transmitted to the head. They can range from mild to severe and can disrupt the way the brain normally works. Even though most concussions are mild, **all concussions are potentially serious and may result in complications including prolonged brain damage and death if not recognized and managed properly.**

*In other words, even a “ding” or a bump on the head can be serious. You can’t see a concussion and most sports concussions occur without loss of consciousness.* Signs and symptoms of concussion may show up right after the injury or can take hours or days to fully appear. If your child reports any symptoms of concussion, or if you notice the symptoms or signs of concussion yourself, seek medical attention right away.

**Symptoms may include one or more of the following:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Headaches</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> “Pressure in head”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nausea or vomiting</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Neck pain</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Balance problems or dizziness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Blurred, double, or fuzzy vision</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity to light or noise</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feeling sluggish or slowed down</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Feeling foggy or groggy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Drowsiness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Change in sleep patterns</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Amnesia</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> “Don’t feel right”</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Fatigue or low energy</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Sadness</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Nervousness or anxiety</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Irritability</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> More emotional</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confusion</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Concentration or memory problems (forgetting game plays)</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Repeating the same question/comment</li> </ul>
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**Signs observed by teammates, parents and coaches include:**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Appears dazed</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Vacant facial expression</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Confused about assignment</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Forgets plays</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Is unsure of game, score, or opponent</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Moves clumsily or displays incoordination</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Answers questions slowly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Slurred speech</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Shows behavior or personality changes</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Can’t recall events prior to hit</i></b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> <b><i>Can’t recall events after hit</i></b></li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Seizures or convulsions</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Change in typical behavior or personality</li> <li><input type="checkbox"/> Loses consciousness</li> </ul>
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**What can happen if my child keeps on playing with a concussion or returns too soon?**

Athletes with the signs and symptoms of concussion must 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 athlete will often under report symptoms of injuries. And concussions are no different. As a result, education of administrators, coaches, parents and athletes is the key for athlete safety.

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### If you think your child has suffered a concussion

Any athlete even suspected of suffering a concussion must be removed from the meet or practice immediately. No athlete may return to activity after an apparent head injury or concussion, regardless of how mild it seems or how quickly symptoms clear, without medical clearance. ***Close observation of the athlete should continue for several hours. The new “Zackery Lystedt Law” in Washington now requires the consistent and uniform implementation of long and well-established return to play concussion guidelines that have been recommended for several years:***

“a youth athlete who is suspected of sustaining a concussion or head injury in a practice or game shall be removed from competition at that time”

#### AND

“...may not return to play until the athlete is evaluated by a licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussion and received written clearance to return to play from that health care provider”.

You should also inform your child’s coach if you think that your child may have a concussion. Remember it’s better to miss one meet or practice than miss the whole season. And when in doubt, the athlete sits out.

For current and up-to-date information on concussions you can go to:  
<http://www.cdc.gov/concussion/HeadsUp/youth.html>

This form must be signed and dated by BOTH the athlete and parent BEFORE the athlete can participate in practice or competition.

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Athlete Name Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Athlete Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Legal Guardian Printed

\_\_\_\_\_  
Parent or Legal Guardian Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date