



Appendix A

Pre-Season Concussion Education

Form to be signed by parents and athletes; and coaches and submitted to coach/ club administrator

PRE-SEASON CONCUSSION EDUCATION

WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a brain injury that can't be seen on x-rays, CT or MRI scans. It affects the way an athlete thinks and can cause a variety of symptoms.

WHAT CAUSES A CONCUSSION?

Any blow to the head, face or neck, or somewhere else on the body that causes a sudden jarring of the head may cause a concussion. Examples include getting body-checked in hockey or hitting one's head on the floor in gym class or on the side of the pool deck.

WHEN SHOULD I SUSPECT A CONCUSSION?

A concussion should be suspected in any athlete who sustains a significant impact to the head, face, neck, or body and reports ANY symptoms or demonstrates ANY visual signs of a concussion. A concussion should also be suspected if an athlete reports ANY concussion symptoms to one of their peers, parents, teachers, or coaches or if anyone witnesses an athlete exhibiting ANY of the visual signs of concussion. Some athletes will develop symptoms immediately while others will develop delayed symptoms (beginning 24-48 hours after the injury).

HOW CAN MY ATHLETE SUFFER A CONCUSSION IN ARTISTIC SWIMMING?

Artistic swimming examples:

- collision with teammate swimming laps,
- eggbeater kick to the head,
- elbow to the head,
- fall from a lift/highlight,
- hitting head on bottom of pool in shallow end (ex: ending of a figure)
- a hard fall onto the bum (in the gym, slipping on the wet deck).

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS OF A CONCUSSION?

A person does not need to be knocked out (lose consciousness) to have had a concussion. Common symptoms include:

- Headaches or head pressure
- Dizziness
- Nausea and vomiting
- Blurred or fuzzy vision
- Sensitivity to light or sound
- Balance problems
- Feeling tired or having no energy
- Not thinking clearly
- Feeling slowed down
- Easily upset or angered
- Sadness
- Nervousness or anxiety
- Feeling more emotional
- Sleeping more or sleeping less Having a hard time falling asleep
- Difficulty working on a computer
- Difficulty reading
- Difficulty learning new information



WHAT ARE THE VISUAL SIGNS OF A CONCUSSION?

Visual signs of a concussion may include:

- Lying motionless on the playing surface
- Slow to get up after a direct or indirect hit to the head
- Disorientation or confusion or inability to respond appropriately to questions
- Blank or vacant stare
- Balance, gait difficulties, motor incoordination, stumbling, slow labored movements
- Facial injury after head trauma
- Clutching head

WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I SUSPECT A CONCUSSION?

If any athlete is suspected of sustaining a concussion during sports they should be immediately removed from play. Any athlete who is suspected of having sustained a concussion during sports must not be allowed to return to the same game or practice.

It is important that ALL athletes with a suspected concussion undergo medical assessment by a medical doctor or nurse practitioner, as soon as possible. The Medical Assessment Letter should be given to coach/club. It is also important that ALL athletes with a suspected concussion receive written medical clearance from a medical doctor or nurse practitioner before returning to full contact sport activities (Stage 5 in Return-to-Sport Protocol).

WHEN CAN THE ATHLETE RETURN TO SCHOOL AND SPORTS?

It is important that all athletes diagnosed with a concussion follow a step-wise return to school and sports-related activities that includes the following Return-to-School and Artistic Swimming Return-to-Sport Strategies. It is important that youth and adult student-athletes return to full-time school activities before progressing to stage 5 and 6 of the Return-to-Sport Protocol.

Return-to-School Protocol

Stage	Aim	Activity	Goal of each step
1	Daily activities at home that do not give the student-athlete symptoms	Typical activities during the day as long as they do not increase symptoms (i.e. reading, texting, screen time). Start at 5-15 minutes at a time and gradually build up.	Gradual return to typical activities
2	School activities	Homework, reading or other cognitive activities outside of the classroom.	Increase tolerance to cognitive work
3	Return to school part-time	Gradual introduction of schoolwork. May need to start with a partial school day or with increased breaks during the day.	Increase academic activities
4	Return to school full-time	Gradually progress	Return to full academic activities and catch up on missed school work



Canada Artistic Swimming Return-to-Sport Protocol

Stage	Aim	Activity	Additional information	DURATION
1	Symptom-limiting activity	Daily activities that do not provoke symptoms Can commence light passive stretching if no symptoms increase GOAL: Gradual re-introduction of work/school activities	Limit exposure to bright lights and loud noise (should not attending practices)	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 20 minutes
To progress to stage 2, a Medical Assessment Letter is required.				
2	Light aerobic activity GOAL: Increase heart rate	At a slow to medium pace for 15-25 minutes at sub-symptom threshold intensity: - light swim kicking (no breath holding or flip turns or head rotations): o start with kicking with kickboard (cease if any neck pain occurs with kicking), o no swimming strokes (as involved head rotations) - walking - stationary cycling - Passive stretching - May start active stretching & extension drills - No inversions (head underwater) - No resistance training	Limit bright light and loud noises. Try kicking drills at a time when no routines are being practiced (no music being played)	<input type="checkbox"/> 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 20 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 25 minutes
3	Sport-specific exercise GOAL: Add movement	Moderate intensity swimming for 30-60 minutes at sub-symptom threshold intensity: - Swimming; o limited breath holding o no flip turns - Artistic swimming skills (no breath holding) o No head impact activities (swim out of pattern) o No inversions (head underwater) o Horizontal drills: sculls, back layouts, front layouts, ballet legs o Eggbeater & eggbeater boots o Landdrills - No resistance training	Limit time at the pool to 60 minutes. Dampen sound with ear plugs if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/> 30 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 45 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 60 minutes
4	Non-contact training drills GOAL: Exercise, coordination and increased thinking	Harder training drills. Gradual increase from moderate to high intensity swimming and artistic swimming: - figure practice; parts ONLY - out of pattern routine swims: lap by lap ONLY - Re-introduce spins. - No highlight training. - Resume progressive resistance training - Ensure non-contact practice without risk of collision	Progress time at pool to full practice training.	<input type="checkbox"/> 75 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 90 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 105 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> 120 minutes
Medical Clearance Letter required to progress to Stage 5				
Youth and Adult student-athletes return to full-time school activities				
5	Full contact practice GOAL: Restore confidence and assess functional skills by coaching staff	Following medical clearance, participation in full practice without activity restriction - Swimming: no restrictions - Artistic Swimming: o Resume figure wholes o Resume in pattern training: start with small parts in gradual increase to full routines. o Resume highlight training	Athlete is reintegrated to full time training with no limitations	With Medical Clearance: <input type="checkbox"/> Full time training
6	Return to sport	Normal artistic swimming training session and competitions.		



HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE FOR THE ATHLETE TO RECOVER?

Most athletes who sustain a concussion will make a complete recovery within 1-2 weeks while most youth athletes will recover within 1-4 weeks. Approximately 15-30% of patients will experience persistent symptoms (>2 weeks for adults; >4 weeks for youth) that may require additional medical assessment and management.

HOW CAN I HELP PREVENT CONCUSSIONS AND THEIR CONSEQUENCES?

Concussion prevention, recognition and management require athletes to follow the rules and regulations of their sport, respect their opponents, avoid head contact, and report suspected concussions.

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CONCUSSIONS PLEASE VISIT:

Parachute Canada: www.parachutecanada.org/concussion

SIGNATURES: The following signatures certify that the athlete and his/her parent or legal guardian have reviewed the above information related to concussion.

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Printed name of athlete	Signature of athlete	Date
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Printed name of parent	Signature of parent	Date

For Coaches ONLY: one signed copy per season required.

Coaches need to sign only one copy. The following signature certifies that the coach has reviewed the above information related to concussion

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Printed name of coach	Signature of coach	Date

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www.parachutecanada.org/guideline

