

Bell Warriors Concussion Policy June 2015 (FINAL)

The safety of our players is of outmost importance to us when it comes to head injuries/concussions.

What is a concussion?

Concussion is a serious brain injury that can occur in both non-contact and contact sports. This injury results from the rapid translational (linear front-to-back, side-to-side) or rotational (angular) movement of the multi-lobular brain within the skull. Such rapid movement can result in damage or disruption of the brain cell structure and metabolism.

The majority of concussions do not result in a loss of consciousness. If a player is suspected of having a concussion, he/she must be removed from the field of play and properly evaluated by a medical professional experienced in concussion diagnosis and treatment.

<http://www.sportconcussionlibrary.com/content/definition-concussion#sthash.frflF554.dpuf>

Symptoms of concussion:

- Loss of consciousness after any trauma to the head
- Confusion
- Headache (even if mild)
- Dizziness
- Nausea or vomiting
- Blurred vision
- Loss of short-term memory (you may not remember the actual injury and the events some time before or after the impact)
- Perseverating (repeating the same thing over and over, despite being told the answer each time, for example, "Was I in an accident?")

A young child may not be able to explain their symptoms, so adults should watch for signs of listlessness, unsteadiness, or changes in a child's mood (e.g., increased irritability) or patterns of eating or sleeping.

These signs or symptoms may occur immediately after the injury, or onset may be delayed.

Coach Responsibilities:

All coaches with the Bell Warriors **must complete** the online module set out by NCAFA "**Making Headway in Sport - Football**". This is designed to assist our coaches in not only recognising signs and symptoms of concussions but prevention as well. We follow the recommended guidelines to return to play set out by Football Canada. That includes 6 steps to be completed as well as Medical clearance from a qualified Health care professional prior to returning to play. Our coaches will not pressure or coerce any player to return to play if they have not completed the concussion protocol and are not cleared to return.

http://ontariofootball.ca/page.php?page_id=59445

Parent's responsibility.

We would expect that all parents look out for the safety and well-being of their children. The signs and symptoms of a concussion may not be apparent to coaches on the field as symptoms may develop over time compounded by that fact your child does not want to be removed from the game and may mask or hide symptoms. We ask that all parents have open and honest communication with our coaches and any coaches involved with your child be it from a school team or other.

If your child plays on a different sports team and has suffered a concussion be it from football or other it is imperative that all coaches/ teams are aware and that the appropriate steps to return to play are followed.

It is extremely important that you monitor your child's progress and that you follow the steps to return to play at any point in time regardless at what step you child is on. If the child experiences any recurrence of symptoms, they must go back to **Step 1** of the **Return to Play** protocol.

Return to Play Steps

STEP 1: No activity, only complete rest.

- Limit school, work and tasks requiring concentration (video games texting even watching TV can exacerbate a concussion).
- Refrain from physical activity until symptoms are gone.
- Once symptoms are gone, a physician, preferably one with experience managing concussions, should be consulted before beginning a step-wise return to play process.

STEP 2: Light aerobic exercise.

- Activities such as walking or stationary cycling.
- The player should be supervised by someone who can help monitor for symptoms and signs.
- No resistance training or weight lifting.
- The duration and intensity of the aerobic exercise can be gradually increased over time if no symptoms or signs return during the exercise or the next day.

Symptoms? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 3 the next day.

STEP 3: Sport specific activities.

- Activities such as skating or throwing can begin at step 3.
- There should be no body contact or other jarring motions such as high speed stops or hitting a baseball with a bat.

Symptoms? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 4 the next day.

STEP 4: Begin Drills without body contact.

Symptoms? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

No symptoms? The time needed to progress from non-contact exercise will vary with the severity of the concussion and with the player.

Proceed to Step 5 only after medical clearance.

STEP 5: Begin drills with body contact.

Symptoms? Return to rest until symptoms have resolved. If symptoms persist, consult a physician.

No symptoms? Proceed to Step 6 the next day.

STEP 6: Game play.