

# RECOGNIZE TO RECOVER CONCUSSION: LET'S TAKE BRAIN INJURIES OUT OF PLAY - ATHLETES

## FACTS

Concussion is a brain injury that alters the way your brain functions.

Concussions can occur from a blow to the head/body; contact with the ground, ball or another player

Most concussions occur without a loss of consciousness ("Passing out").

Severity of injury depends on many factors and is not known until symptoms resolve and brain function is back to normal

All concussions are not created equally. Each player is different, each injury is different, and your team medical staff should evaluate all injuries.

Follow the "Rules of the Game" this will limit and decrease these types of injuries

## SYMPTOMS

Different symptoms can occur and may not show up for several days. Common symptoms include:

- Headache
- Loss of consciousness
- Confusion
- Double/Fuzzy vision
- Dizziness
- Balance problems
- Nausea
- Slow reaction time
- Amnesia/Difficulty remembering
- Difficulty concentrating
- Sensitivity to light and noise
- Feeling sluggish, foggy or groggy
- Feeling more emotional than usual
- Irritability
- Sleep disturbances

## WHY I SHOULD REPORT MY SYMPTOMS?

Unlike other injuries, there may be consequences to "play through" a concussion.

Practicing or playing while still experiencing symptoms may prolong the time it takes to recover and return to playing soccer.

Repetitive brain injury, when not managed promptly and properly, may lead to long term injury.

Your brain is one of the most vital organs in your body.

Note: Symptoms may worsen with physical or mental exertion (e.g. computer and cell phone use, loud music or tv.).

Concussions "ARE" treatable — they should be managed under the supervision of your physician.

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I THINK I'VE HAD A CONCUSSION

### REPORT IT

Look out for your teammates and never ignore symptoms even if they appear mild. Tell your athletic trainer, team physician, coach and parents if you think you or a teammate may have a concussion.

### GET CHECKED OUT

Your health and well-being is the coaching and medical staff's first priority. If you are suspected of suffering a concussion, the medical staff will make sure you follow U.S. Soccer's Concussion Evaluation and Management Guidelines.

### TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN