



Concussion Management Protocol

California State Law AB 2127 and CIF-SS Bylaw 503 are recognized and followed by the Damien High School Sports Medicine Staff.

What is a Concussion?

A concussion is a traumatic brain injury caused by a direct or indirect blow to the head that results in the impairment of cognitive function such as memory, vision, balance and equilibrium. It may or may not result in a loss of consciousness.

Education and Compliance

CA State Law AB 2127 and CIF-SS Bylaw 503 mandate that any student-athlete suspected of a concussion or traumatic brain injury during a practice or game be immediately removed from competition for the remainder of the day. Any student-athlete suspected of a concussion may not return to play until they have been evaluated and received *written clearance* by a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussions. As defined by CIF, the scope of practice for a licensed healthcare provider trained in education and management of concussions limits evaluation to a Medical Doctor (**MD**) or Doctor of Osteopathy (**DO**).

If a licensed healthcare provider trained in education and management of concussions determines that the student-athlete has sustained a concussion or minor traumatic brain injury, the student-athlete is required to complete a graduated return-to-play (RTP) protocol of a *minimum of seven full days in duration*, under the supervision of a licensed healthcare provider.

Parents and Athletes

In compliance with CA AB 2127, all athletes and their parent or guardian will receive the Damien High School Concussion Information Packet on an annual basis. Written verification by the athlete and the athlete's parent or guardian must be returned to the Athletics Office prior to the athlete's first practice or competition. Athletes are not permitted to practice, condition, weight lift or compete until this form has been turned into the athletic department.

Athletes

The Sports Medicine Director or Head Athletic Trainer will administer a baseline Concussion Vital Signs assessment to every athlete prior to the start of each athletic season. Baseline testing is intended to aid in post-injury management of concussion and is used in conjunction with comprehensive approach to concussion management.

Coaches and Athletic Department Personnel

In accordance with CIF Bylaw 22.9.f, all coaches, paid or unpaid, and athletic department personnel are required to complete the NFHS course, Concussion in Sport, on a bi-annual basis.

Management Protocol

Any student-athlete who is suspected of a concussion and experiences a loss of consciousness for any duration of time will be suspected of a cervical spine injury and EMS will be called.

In the event that a student-athlete is suspected of a concussion and does not experience a loss of consciousness, the following steps will be taken:

1. The student-athlete will be removed from competition immediately for the remainder of the day.
2. The Certified Athletic Trainer will complete an initial evaluation, which includes the SCAT5 assessment tool.
 - a. If the certified athletic trainer is not present, the coach is *required* to communicate the injury to the certified athletic trainer via phone call, text message or email before the end of the day. An initial evaluation will be administered as soon as reasonably possible.
3. The parent/guardian will be notified via phone call. The athlete will remain under the supervision of the certified athletic trainer and released to the parent/guardian or designated adult with *Concussion Home Care Instructions* and the *Physician Communication Form*.
 - a. The *Post-Concussion Home Care Instructions* and the *Physician Communication Form* will be explained to the parent/guardian or designated adult prior to being released; they will be informed of any symptoms that warrant an immediate visit to the Emergency Room.
4. Based on the symptoms reported by the student-athlete and the initial evaluation, the student-athlete and parent/guardian will be instructed to visit either the Emergency Room immediately or their primary care physician as soon as possible.
 - a. If the student-athlete is referred to the Emergency Room, they will be *required* to follow-up with their primary care physician or a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussions for written clearance.
5. The certified athletic trainer will notify the head coach, athletic director, attendance office, counselor and teachers via email.
6. Following the injury, the student-athlete is required to see the athletic trainer daily until cleared to begin the return-to-play protocol by their primary care physician or a licensed health care provider trained in education and management of concussions. ***All written clearances must be signed by an MD or DO!***

At this time, the student-athlete is not permitted to practice, condition, weight lift or compete until the certified athletic trainer receives written clearance from a licensed healthcare provider to begin the 7-step Return-to-Play protocol. If the licensed healthcare provider prefers a different return-to-play protocol, it must be attached to the written clearance.

Clearance Following Concussion Diagnosis

In compliance with CIF Bylaw 503, student-athletes suspected of a concussion are not permitted to return to play until they have been evaluated and received *written clearance* by a licensed healthcare provider trained in education and management of concussions.

Written clearance can be provided via the *Physician Communication Form* or on a separate physician's note with the following information clearly stated:

- a. Diagnosis
- b. Clearance Date to begin RTP
- c. Physician's Name and Contact Information, clearly written
- d. Physician's Signature

If the physician prefers to use his/her own return-to-play protocol, it must be attached to the written clearance.

THE CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER RESERVES THE RIGHT TO MAKE ALL FINAL RETURN TO PLAY DECISIONS. COACHES ARE NOT ALLOWED TO MAKE RETURN TO PLAY DECISIONS IN THE ABSENCE OF THE CERTIFIED ATHLETIC TRAINER.

A DOCTOR'S NOTE DOES NOT MEAN AN IMMEDIATE RETURN TO PRACTICE OR COMPETITION!

Return to Learn

All student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion will be required to take a post-injury Concussion Vital Signs assessment. The post-injury CVS assessment will be scheduled at the discretion of the Certified Athletic Trainer, when the student-athlete has reached Stage 5 of the RTL protocol. If the student-athlete's post-injury results are within 5% of the baseline assessment, they will be cleared for Stage 6 of the Return to Learn Protocol.

All student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion **MUST** complete the return-to-learn progression *before* they can begin Stage 2 of the Return-to-Play progression.

Stage	Activity	Objective
1-No Activity	Complete cognitive rest (ie. No school or homework, refrain from reading, texting, video games, watching TV, etc.)	Recovery
2- Gradual reintroduction of cognitive activity	Short periods of cognitive activity (reading, watching TV, texting, etc.) for 5-15 minutes at a time, as tolerated	Gradual, controlled increase in threshold of cognitive activities
3-Homework at Home	Homework for 20-30 minutes at a time	Increase cognitive stamina through periods of self-paced cognitive activity
4- School Re-Entry	Half-day at school after tolerating 1-2 cumulative hours of homework at home; No tests or quizzes	Re-entry into school with accommodations from instructors (ie. Rest breaks for 5-10 minutes at a time, as needed)
5-Gradual Reintegration into School	Full day of school with no tests or quizzes; Post-injury CVS assessment required to progress to next step	As cognitive stamina improves, accommodations from instructors should decrease
6- Resumption of Full Cognitive Activities	Introduce tests and quizzes; Can begin making up any missed work	Full return to school without any accommodations or restrictions in the classroom

Return to Play

CA State Law AB 2127 mandates that student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion cannot return to competition sooner than 7 days after evaluation and diagnosis by a licensed healthcare professional.

All student-athletes diagnosed with a concussion **MUST** complete the following 7-step Return-to-Play protocol *before* they are cleared to return to full sport participation and competition.

Student-athletes cannot progress more than one stage per day. It is mandatory that there are 24 hours between each step of the return-to-play progression.

If symptoms return at any stage during the return to play progression, the student-athlete should stop all physical activity IMMEDIATELY. If the student-athlete is symptom-free the following day, they can return to the previous step in the return-to-play progression where no symptoms occurred. If the student-athlete cannot pass a step after 3 attempts due to return of concussion symptoms, they will be referred to a licensed healthcare professional for further evaluation.

Stage	Type of Activity/Exercise	Activity/Exercise Completed
1	Following concussion diagnosis, student-athlete completes symptom inventory daily with certified athletic trainer until cleared by MD or DO. When student-athlete has been symptom free for 24 hours, he will complete a post-injury Concussion Vital Signs cognitive test. Student-athlete cannot progress to step 2 until they can complete normal academic activities.	Student-athlete restricted from all activities requiring exertion
2	Light Aerobic Activity	10 minutes of walking
3	Moderate Aerobic Activity & Light Resistance Training	20 minutes of jogging and body weight exercises (1x10 squats, push ups, planks)
4	Strenuous Aerobic Activity & Moderate Resistance Training; student-athlete can condition with team	30 minutes of jogging/running; weight lifting <50% max weight.
5	Non-contact, sport-specific drills; Student-athlete can return to weight room with team	45 minutes sport-specific drills. Will vary based on sport.
6	No Contact Practice	No Contact Practice
7	Full Contact Practice; Student-athlete must complete symptom inventory after practice to successfully complete return to play protocol and return to competition.	Full Contact Practice

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