



Concussion Action Steps and Chain of Communication

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I. Overview:

The following steps summarize the progression of a Forney ISD student athlete from a suspected concussion through return to play.

1. Suspected Concussion – Forney ISD student athletes are immediately removed from athletic participation in the event of a suspected concussion.
2. Enact Return to Play Protocol – The Forney ISD Return to Play Protocol will be enacted by the Licensed Athletic Trainer.
3. Evaluation by Physician – The first step in Return to Play requires that the student athlete be evaluated by a physician. The LAT may recommend a physician who is trained in concussions and neurocognitive medicine.
4. Concussion Oversight Team – In accordance with HB 2038, Forney ISD’s Concussion Oversight Team has designed a process to guide a student athlete’s return to play. This process will be administered by the LAT.
5. Return to Play – The LAT oversees/performs Return to Play Protocols and makes the final determination when a student athlete may return to play.

II. Definitions:

Licensed Athletic Trainer (LAT) - A person who is licensed by the State of Texas to practice athletic training, which is a form of health care that includes the practice of preventing, recognizing, assessing, managing, treating, disposing of, and reconditioning athletic injuries under the direction of a physician licensed in this state or another qualified, licensed health professional.

Concussion – A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury caused by a direct blow to the head or indirect blow to the body which causes the brain to move rapidly within the skull. Symptoms vary and may be temporary or long-lasting, and they may show up immediately after the injury or may not appear for hours or days.

Suspected Concussion – By law a student shall be removed from an interscholastic athletics immediately if one of the following persons believes the student might have sustained a concussion during the practice or competition: coach, physician, licensed healthcare professional, parent or guardian.

House Bill 2038 – Known as “Natasha’s Law,” this Bill was passed by the Texas Legislature in 2011. It requires each school district to have a Concussion Oversight Team which designs and implements the protocol for diagnosis, treatment, and return to play for a student-athlete who sustains a concussion.

Concussion Oversight Team (COT) - Each concussion oversight team shall establish a return-to-play protocol, based on peer-reviewed scientific evidence, for a student athlete’s return to athletics practice or interscholastic competition following the force or impact believed to have caused a concussion. The Team consists of a physician trained in concussion and neurocognitive medicine, Dr. Wes Acker, Forney ISD LAT’s, the Fisd Nursing Administrator Stacie Brown, and other specialists as applicable.

Return to Play Protocol (RTP) – The return to play protocol is a defined, systematic process required by House Bill 2038 and approved for use by Forney ISD’s Concussion Oversight Team which helps determine a student athlete’s fitness to return to participation after a suspected concussion.

Second-Impact Syndrome - Concussions can have serious long-term health effects. A major concern is a student-athlete returning to play too soon, thus exposing the student to a second concussion before the initial one has fully healed. This could lead to a serious and potentially fatal injury commonly referred to as second-impact syndrome. The Return to Play Protocol is intended to help guard against such injury.

Neurocognitive Computerized Test (ImPact, etc.) – A neurocognitive test, of which ImPact is a version utilized in Forney ISD, is a computer-based test that can offer a baseline score and indicate neurocognitive progression, post-injury. It is a tool used to help determine when it is safe for a student-athlete to return to play after a concussion.

Return to Play Progressions – LAT’s in Forney use Return to Play Progressions, a defined series of systematic actions designed to offer student athletes a protected path to return to practice or competition (return to play) as well as return to academic classes (return to learn), per latest scientific research and the advice of the COT.

III. Return to Play Protocol:

Once the initial evaluations have taken place for a student athlete suspected of a concussion, the following steps will constitute the gradual progression of Return to Play Protocol.

1. Light Aerobic exercise with no resistive training
2. Aerobic activity with resistive training
3. Sports specific activity
4. Non-Contact practice
5. Full-Contact practice (w/contact if applicable)

*If student athlete experiences any post-concussion symptoms during this process, he/she must wait until 24 symptom-free hours have passed, then he/she shall resume at previous day progression.

*Upon completion of Forney ISD RTP Protocol the LAT must receive a Forney ISD Return to Play form *signed by parent or guardian*. Only after the LAT has determined that the student athlete is ready to return to play and the RTP form is on file will practice or competition in a Forney ISD Athletic program resume.

*The Forney ISD Licensed Athletic Trainer will make the final determination when a student athlete's RTP process is complete and he or she may return to play.