



# Recognizing A Concussion

## WHAT IS A CONCUSSION?

A concussion is a type of traumatic brain injury—or TBI—caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or by a hit to the body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. This fast movement can cause the brain to bounce around or twist in the skull, creating chemical changes in the brain and sometimes stretching and damaging the brain cells.

## HOW CAN I SPOT A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?

Children and teens who show or report one or more of the signs and symptoms listed below—or simply say they just “don’t feel right” after a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body—may have a concussion or other serious brain injury.

SIGNS OBSERVED BY PARENTS OR COACHES	SYMPTOMS REPORTED BY CHILDREN AND TEENS
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Appears dazed or stunned</li> <li>• Forgets an instruction, is confused about an assignment or position, or is unsure of the game, score, or opponent.</li> <li>• Moves clumsily.</li> <li>• Answers questions slowly.</li> <li>• Loses consciousness (even briefly).</li> <li>• Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes.</li> <li>• Can’t recall events prior to or after a hit or fall.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Headache or “pressure” in head.</li> <li>• Nausea or vomiting.</li> <li>• Balance problems or dizziness, or double or blurry vision.</li> <li>• Bothered by light or noise.</li> <li>• Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy.</li> <li>• Confusion, or concentration or memory problems.</li> <li>• Just not “feeling right,” or “feeling down.”</li> </ul>

## WHAT SHOULD I DO IF MY CHILD OR TEEN HAS A POSSIBLE CONCUSSION?

As a parent, if you think your child or teen may have a concussion, you should:

1. Remove your child or teen from play.
2. Keep your child or teen out of play the day of the injury. Your child or teen should be seen by a health care provider and only return to play with permission from a health care provider who is experienced in evaluating for concussion.
3. Ask your child’s or teen’s health care provider for written instructions on helping your child or teen return to school. You can give the instructions to your child’s or teen’s school nurse and teacher(s) and return-to-play instructions to the coach and/or athletic trainer.

Do not try to judge the severity of the injury yourself. Only a health care provider should assess a child or teen for a possible concussion. Concussion signs and symptoms often show up soon after the injury. But you may not know how serious the concussion is at first, and some symptoms may not show up for hours or days. The brain needs time to heal after a concussion. A child’s or teen’s return to school and sports should be a gradual process that is carefully managed and monitored by a health care provider.



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