

HEADS UP: Concussion in Sports ...

A FACT SHEET FOR PARENTS AND STUDENTS

The Kentucky General Assembly passed a new law (2012 HB281), effective upon the Governor's signature on April 11, 2012, regarding all students who participate in extracurricular interscholastic athletics including sport-activities. In addition, through HR58 passed in the 2012 General Assembly, this procedure is strongly recommended for all levels of non-scholastic athletic competition. Please note these important provisions within the new statute provisions (KRS 160.445):

- (1) A child must be immediately removed from participation (practice or competition) if an interscholastic coach, school athletic personnel member or contest official suspects that a concussion might have been sustained due to the student displaying signs, symptoms, or behaviors consistent with a concussion or brain injury in such practice or competition.
- (2) A child may not participate again until a physician or other licensed health care provider trained in the evaluation and management of concussions and other brain injuries has evaluated him/her and the student has received clearance from that professional to return to participation.
- (3) Key definitions:
"Licensed health care provider" means an M.D. or DO, as well as any other licensed health care provider licensed or certified through the Kentucky Board of Medical Licensure (or comparable organization for contests held out of state).

For complete details, see <http://khsaa.org/coaches-officials/sports-safety/sports-medicine/>, and select KHSAA and NFHS Concussion Implementation Program.

What is a concussion?

A concussion is a brain injury. Concussions are caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body. Even a "ding," "getting your bell rung", or what seems to be a mild bump or blow to the head can be serious and could be a concussion.

What parents/guardians should do if they think their child has a concussion?

1. **OBEY THE NEW LAW.**
 - a. Keep your child out of participation until s/he is cleared to return by a licensed healthcare provider.
 - b. Seek medical attention right away.
2. Teach your child that it's not smart to play with a concussion.
3. Tell all of your child's coaches and the student's school nurse about ANY concussion.

What are the signs and symptoms of a concussion?

You cannot see a concussion. Signs and symptoms of concussion can show up right after the injury or may not appear or be noticed until days after the injury. If your teen reports one or more symptoms of concussion listed below, or if you notice the symptoms yourself, keep your teen out of play and seek medical attention right away.

STUDENTS:

If you think you have a concussion:

- **Tell your coaches & parents** – Never ignore a bump or blow to the head, even if you feel fine. Also, tell your coach if you think one of your teammates might have a concussion.
- **Get a medical check-up** – A physician or other licensed health care provider can tell you if you have a concussion, and when it is OK to return to play.
- **Give yourself time to heal** – If you have a concussion, your brain needs time to heal. While your brain is healing, you are much more likely to have another concussion. It is important to rest and not return to play until you get the OK from your health care professional.

IT'S BETTER TO MISS ONE CONTEST THAN THE WHOLE SEASON.

Signs Reported by Students:

- Headache or "pressure" in head
- Nausea or vomiting
- Balance problems or dizziness
- Double or blurry vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling sluggish, hazy, foggy, or groggy
- Concentration or memory problems
- Confusion
- Just not "feeling right" or is "feeling down"

PARENTS:

How can you help your child prevent a concussion?

Every sport is different, but there are steps your children can take to protect themselves from concussion and other injuries.

- Make sure they wear the right protective equipment for their activity. It should fit properly, be well maintained, and be worn consistently and correctly.
- Ensure that they follow their coaches' rules for safety and the rules of the sport.
- Encourage them to practice good sportsmanship at all times.

Signs Observed by Parents or Guardians:

- Appears dazed or stunned
- Is confused about assignment or position
- Forgets an instruction
- Is unsure of game, score, or opponent
- Moves clumsily
- Answers questions slowly
- Loses consciousness (even briefly)
- Shows mood, behavior, or personality changes
- Can't recall events prior to hit or fall
- Can't recall events after hit or fall

Information on concussions provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

For more information visit: www.cdc.gov/Concussion and [additional reference material may be found at www.kyconcussions.com](http://www.kyconcussions.com)

IMPORTANT: Students participating in interscholastic athletics, including the sports activities; and their parents/guardians; must annually sign the acknowledgement below and return it to their school. Students cannot practice or compete in those activities until this form is signed and returned. This acknowledgement is contained in KHSAA Form GE04, and available online at www.khsaa.org/forms/ge04.pdf

We have received the information provided on the concussion fact sheet titled, "HEADS UP: Concussion in High School Sports."

Student's Signature

Date

Student's Printed Name

Parent's/Guardian's Signature

Date

Student's Grade

Student's School