

# **Aldine ISD**

## Concussion Management Guidelines

### **Introduction**

Concussion in youth sports is a common injury that requires vigilance in detection and expertise in management for safe return to play that decreases the chance for recurrent injury and impaired school performance. These guidelines are put in place to help athletic trainers, coaches, teachers and administrators understand the role they all play in the management of this injury.

### **Initial management**

Any athlete suspected by a coach, athletic trainer, parent or guardian of having a concussion will be removed from play and not be allowed to return until evaluated by a physician skilled in management of concussions. Athletes removed from play but not sent to the emergency room will be closely observed by coaching and athletic training staff and the parents will be contacted and informed of the injury. Athletes with mild concussion symptoms may be allowed to remain on the sidelines of the game or practice at the discretion of the athletic trainer, coach or parent.

Prior to leaving the game or practice, a parent or responsible adult will be given the concussion information sheet outlining the requirements of HB 2038 and suggestions on how to care for the concussed athlete. In addition, the parents will be given the Concussion fact sheet from the Centers for Disease Control, the required notification of release of information and the notification of immunity required by HB 2038. The parent or guardian will be asked to sign a sheet confirming that they have received this information. The signature sheet will be maintained by the coach or athletic trainer in the same file that contains the pre participation physical.

### **Referral to ER via EMS**

If a student athlete sustains a concussion and any of the following signs exist, EMS will be activated and the student athlete will be transported to the nearest emergency facility

- Any concern for spine injury with neurological symptoms
- Loss of consciousness greater than 30 seconds
- Rapidly worsening neurological symptoms
- Decreasing level of consciousness
- Decrease or irregularity in respiration
- Decrease or irregularity in pulse
- Unequal, dilated or un-reactive pupils
- Mental status changes: lethargy, difficulty maintaining arousal, confusion, or agitation
- Seizure activity

Students evaluated in an emergency room may not be released to begin the return to play protocol by the emergency room physician.

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### **Referral to treating physician**

Student athletes who do not require emergency room evaluation may be seen by the team physician or a physician of their choice as their symptoms dictate. All athletes are recommended to be seen within 72 hours. If baseline neuropsychological testing was done, and the physician seeing the patient does not have access to that test in the office, a copy of the test will be printed and given to the athlete to take to the appointment or will be forwarded to the treating physician via e-mail. In general, post-concussion neuropsychological testing will be done in the physician office. The Aldine ISD supports the use of cognitive assessment with neuropsychological testing as part of the management of the concussed student athlete.

### **Notification of School personnel**

The athletic trainer or coach will send an e-mail to all teachers and administrators that interact with the injured student athlete. Each school will define the most efficient way to accomplish this task; if needed.

### **Management of the student athlete while recovering from a concussion**

Student athletes who are recovering from a concussion will adhere to physical and cognitive rest to aid in their recovery. They will not participate in athletics or physical education and will be encouraged to limit any unnecessary cognitive exertion. If they are unable to attend classes because of concussion related symptoms, they should not be allowed to attend practice. It is common in the first days following a concussion for student athletes to require extra sleep or rest from classes. Activity adaptations to be considered by the athletic training staff and faculty include:

- Allow the student athlete to rest in the training room or nurses station if unable to tolerate classroom work
- Attend school for less than full days
- Allow pre printed class notes, memory books
- Allow extra time on tests or un-timed tests. Testing should be delayed if at all possible as a student with a concussion will not test in a way that accurately reflects their current knowledge.
- Limit homework as much as possible
- Limit exposure to computer monitors and movie screens.
- Limit exposure to loud noises or crowds.

The physician caring for the injured athlete may have other specific recommendations or restrictions. These adaptations should be encouraged for all staff interacting with a concussed student athlete. These restrictions on cognitive exertion should remain in place until the student athlete has been released to begin the return to play protocol.

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### **Management of the student athlete during the return to play protocol**

Once the student athlete has been released to begin the return to play protocol, it is the responsibility of the athletic trainer at the high school level to administer and observe compliance with the protocol. At the middle school level, return to play protocol activities will be monitored by the athletic trainer, coach or other designated individual defined by the Concussion Oversight Team as being responsible for administration of the protocol. Student athletes may not advance their activity more than 1 day while on break from the school. For instance if a student athlete is released to begin the return to play protocol on a Friday, and successfully completes that stage without a return of symptoms, then they may advance to the next level of activity only and should maintain that level of exertion until they can be monitored again by the nurse, coach or athletic training staff. They will begin day 3 of the protocol upon return to school.

At the end of the exercise session for days 1-4 of the return to play protocol, the athlete will complete a symptom checklist by simply answering yes or no if any of the symptoms on the list worsened during or after exercise. This is to be completed by the athlete, not by the coach or athletic trainer and will serve as documentation for the physician and for the school district that the student has complied with the return to play protocol. If there is any worsening of symptoms, the student athlete will be returned to physical and cognitive rest for 24 hours and then will begin the return to play protocol again. If the student athlete is unable to complete the return to play protocol the second time, he or she will be referred back to the treating physician for further evaluation and guidance. When the form is complete, the athletic trainer or coach will sign the form and fax the return to play protocol documentation form to the treating physician. The physician will return the form indicating that they are releasing the student athlete to begin game play without a follow up visit or that they are requesting that the athlete be seen prior to release. The student athlete is not allowed to return to play until this document has been received by the school and the student athlete has been released. Once the final release is received from the physician, the student athlete, student's parent or legal guardian and the designated school district official must sign the UIL return to play form. All documents will be maintained in the same file that contains the student athlete's pre participation physical.

### **Concussion Oversight Team**

The concussion oversight team will be comprised of a physician skilled in concussion management and both athletic trainer's from each high school. In addition, a neurophysiologist will be on the team whenever possible. Other Team physicians at Aldine ISD High Schools may also be included when possible.

- 1.) Physician – Dr. Scott Rand
- 2.) Athletic Trainers for each High School.
  - a. Aldine High School – Leslie Morris and Leslie Rivera
  - b. Davis High School – Justin Bain and Alberta Nichols
  - c. Eisenhower High School – Ricky Nelson and Marshalle Bradley
  - d. MacArthur High School – Colby Harris and Jennifer Chandler
  - e. Nimitz High School – Chad Whiteneck and Shauna White