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## CONCUSSION POLICY

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### DEFINITION

- Concussion is a disturbance in brain function caused by trauma to the brain
- Usually the changes are temporary and the majority of players recover completely in managed correctly.
- MBA encourages all members to adopt the following practices to prevent recognise and manage concussion
- Basketball Australia acknowledges that many of the instances of concussion will take place in places where a medical practitioner is not immediately available to make an assessment of an athlete who sustains a head injury.
- These guidelines have been developed to outline the issues for athletes, coaches, team managers and others responding to athletes who have received a head injury.
- The purpose of these guidelines is to protect the welfare of athletes and they are not intended to replace medical assessment and treatment.

### GAME DAY MANAGEMENT

The most important steps in the initial management of concussion include:

- Recognizing the injury
- Removing the player from the game
- Referring the player to a medical doctor for assessment.

### SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS OF A SUSPECTED CONCUSSION

Concussion should be suspected whenever any of these signs or symptoms are present.

- Loss of consciousness
- Dazed, blank or vacant look
- Headache
- Confusion/ not aware of events
- Seizure or convulsion
- Lying motionless on the ground/slow to get up
- Balance problems/ uncoordinated
- Dizziness
- Clutching or grabbing the head
- Amnesia or difficulty remembering
- Nausea or vomiting
- Feeling slowed down, Fatigue or low energy
- Drowsiness
- "Pressure in the head"
- More emotional or irritable, sadness
- Blurred/ double vision
- Sensitivity to light or noise
- Feeling like "in a fog", "Don't feel right"
- Nervous or anxious
- Neck pain
- Difficulty concentrating

### MEMORY FUNCTION

If an athlete cannot answer the following questions correctly this may suggest concussion:

- "Which venue are we at today?"
- "What quarter is it now?"
- "Who scored last in this game?"
- "Which team did you play last game?"

- “Did your team win their last game?”

If a medical professional or trained person is available then a Standardised Concussion Assessment Tool (SCAT) Card should be used to evaluate players for concussion

### **REMOVAL FROM PLAY**

- Notify the First Aider on Duty to co-ordinate the on-court management.
- Athletes with suspected concussion should:
  - Be treated in accordance with normal first aid principles (danger, response, airway, breathing, circulation and spinal immobilisation);
  - Not be moved by others (except where required for airway support);
  - Be removed from play immediately;
  - If unconscious, the player must only be moved onto the stretcher by qualified health professionals, trained in spinal immobilisation techniques. If no qualified health professional is on site then do not move the player, call and wait arrival of the ambulance
  - Not be allowed to return to play till they are medically assessed, even if symptoms resolve;
  - Not be left alone; and
  - Not drive.
- If a doctor has diagnosed concussion and declared a player unfit to play the rest of the game, no one may override this decision, including the player.

### **REFER THE PLAYER**

- All players with concussion or suspected concussion need a medical assessment by a registered medical doctor and should be referred to their local GP or Peel Hospital Emergency Department.
- Urgent transfer to hospital is required if the player displays any of the following symptoms:
  - Athlete complains of neck pain
  - Deteriorating conscious state
  - Increasing confusion or irritability
  - Severe or increasing headache
  - Repeated vomiting
  - Unusual behaviour change
  - Seizure or convulsion
  - Double vision
  - Weakness/tingling/burning in arms or legs

### **FOLLOW UP MANAGEMENT**

- Rest is very important after concussion as it helps the brain to heal
- Concussions affect people differently and the time taken for the symptoms to resolve varies
- It is important that athletes do not ignore their symptoms

### **RETURN TO PLAY**

- Any athlete who sustains a suspected concussion or more serious brain injury must provide a medical certificate to their Club before returning to play. This onus is on the player, and Team Manager to ensure it has been provided
- Players should not return to play until they have returned to school
- Players should be returned to sport in a graduated manner that should be supervised by their medical practitioner
- There should be at least 24 hours between each stage of the return the sport regime
- If a player becomes symptomatic at any stage, they should drop back to the previous symptom free level and try to progress again after 24 hours.
- If a player continues to be symptomatic for more than 10 days, they should be reviewed again by a medical practitioner