

University of Nebraska Athletic Medicine

Post-concussion Information Sheet

Definition of Concussion: *a concussion is a type of mild traumatic brain injury (MTBI). It is caused by a bump, blow, or jolt to the head or body that causes the head and brain to move quickly back and forth. Some of the ways you can get a concussion are when you hit your head during a fall, car crash, or sports-related injury. Health care professionals refer to concussions as “mild” because they usually are not life-threatening. Even so, their effects can be serious.*

What should you expect: *most people with a concussion recover quickly and completely. During recovery, it is important to know that each individual has a unique range of symptoms. Some symptoms may appear right away, while others may not be noticed for hours or even days after your injury. You may not realize you have problems until you try to do your usual activities again.*

Common symptoms include:

Physical	Cognitive	Emotional	Sleep
Headache	Feeling mentally foggy	Irritability	Drowsiness
Nausea/vomiting	Feeling slowed down	Sadness	Sleeping less than usual
Dizziness	Difficulty remembering	More emotional	Sleeping more than usual
Balance problems	Difficulty concentrating	Nervousness	Trouble falling asleep
Visual problems		Anxiety	Difficulty staying asleep
Fatigue/feeling tired			
Sensitivity to light and/or noise			
Numbness/tingling			

It is OK to:

- Use Tylenol/acetaminophen for headaches (as directed by Dr. Albers)
- Use an ice pack for your head or neck as needed
- Eat a normal diet
- Rest, take naps

Do NOT:

- Drive a car; ride a bike, scooter, hover board, or long board until Dr. Albers clears this activity
- Engage in mental activity: class, study hall, homework, reading, using a computer, playing video games until you are cleared to do so
- Engage in physical activity or sports until you are cleared
- Take Advil/Aleve/Motrin/ibuprofen/aspirin

What can I do to feel better?

- *Getting plenty of rest and sleep helps the brain to heal. Do not try to do too much too fast. As you start to feel better you can slowly and gradually return to your usual routine.*
- *Avoid activities that are physically demanding or require a lot of thinking or concentration. Ignoring your symptoms and “toughing it out” often makes symptoms worse.*
- *Do not drink alcohol*

Reference: CDC “What to Expect After a Concussion”

See reverse side for information on CTE

Chronic Traumatic Encephalopathy (CTE) Information:

- A progressive neurodegenerative disease (tauopathy) caused by total brain trauma
- Not limited to athletes who have reported concussions
- Incidence and prevalence is unknown
- Diagnosed only after death by distinctive immunoreactive stains of the brain for Tau protein
- Typical signs and symptoms include a decline of recent memory and executive function, mood and behavioral disturbances (especially depression, impulsivity, aggressiveness, anger, irritability, suicidal behavior and eventual progression to dementia).
- Initial signs and symptoms do not typically manifest until decades after trauma is received (age 40-50).

Reference: Boston University Center for the Study of Traumatic Encephalopathy (CSTE).